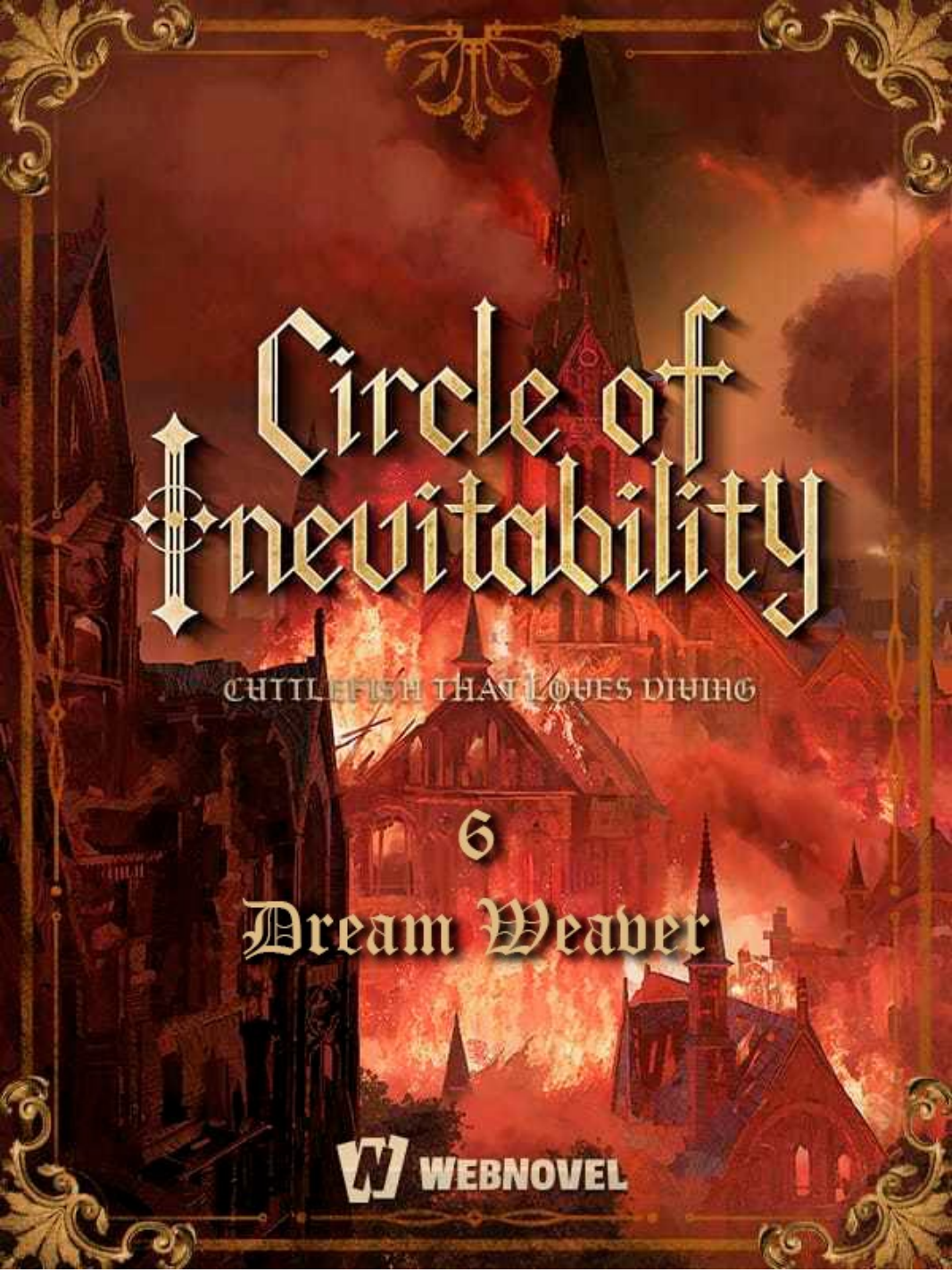
Circle of Inevitability
CUTTLEFISH THAT LOVES DIVING
6
Dream Weaver
WEBNOVEL

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Chapter 885: The Corrupted Cannon Gun

Chapter 885 The Corrupted Cannon Gun

Dreams are reality, despair is hope

The sunset light shone through the window, casting a dim golden-red glow in the room.

Except for Lugano who had taken Ludwig to explore local cuisine in the New City of Silver, Franca, Jenna and Anthony remained in the living room, listening to Lumian recount what had happened to him after they parted ways.

Lumian recounted the key points of Termiboros becoming Amon, the psychological treatment report Amon had read out, and the subsequent "story" script, all in a detached manner as if he were an outside observer, without concealing anything.

That low and indifferent voice entered Franca and Jenna's ears, gradually making them feel a suffocating pain and despair, as if they had experienced it themselves.

This was not physical pain, nor the kind of despair when facing death. It came from one's own insignificance, one's own powerlessness, from the realization that one's beliefs, emotions, and decisions were actually products arranged by someone else.

Franca couldn't help but think of the lab mice she used to work with frequently.

She finally understood why Lumian, despite not being averse to switching to the Demoness pathway, was still in pain over advancing to demigod status, his emotions constantly suppressed.

Looking at that familiar yet strange face, that expressionless beautiful visage, Franca felt an inexplicable heartache and pity.

After Lumian finished recounting his final choice, the room fell into silence.

After a moment, Franca took the initiative to change the subject, sighing. "I never imagined that Black Tear was also arranged by that individual. Wasn't that something from the Demoness Sect?"

"If not Black Tear, there would be White Tear or Gray Tear. If they can't arrange the vessel for the Primordial Demoness's divine descent, can't they arrange for other Demonesses?" Lumian responded calmly.

Seeing him in this state, Jenna felt a wave of sadness and heartache. With her experience, she would rather Lumian be in a state of rage, or directly show the pain hidden deep in his heart, instead of being like a dried-up well now, with all emotions pressed down to the bottom.

Franca had a similar feeling. She almost instinctively made a self-deprecating remark, "I never thought Jenna and I would have a

place in the script, even if our role was just to stabilize your mental state, providing a stable anchor point when you advance to become the Demoness of Despair."
The word "anchor" was something she had encountered a few times with Madam Judgment, suspecting it was related to how High-Sequence Beyonders stabilized their own state—the higher the Sequence, the easier it was to go mad, and anchors seemed to be external help to strengthen self-awareness and resist the tendency to lose control.
"It's not just that," Lumian, still wearing the black cloak, said in a matter-of-fact tone. "It's also a means to prevent me from becoming addicted to the feeling of Aurore's soul fragments gradually reviving, unwilling to switch back to the Hunter pathway, and gradually abandoning my self-identification as a male."
Jenna and Franca fell silent, both feeling an indescribable pain in their hearts.
The latter stood up from the large, high-backed chair that she could curl up in, looked at Lumian, and said straightforwardly, "I don't like the way you put it, as if Jenna and I have really become tools.
"Black Tear only made the problem erupt earlier; it doesn't mean the problem didn't exist, it doesn't mean that the emotions and thoughts in our hearts were created out of thin air, that they appeared because of that individual's arrangements!
"I-I only speak for myself, my attitude is that I won't persuade you to definitely switch back to the Hunter pathway, nor will I care whether you're a Demoness or a Hunter. I'm also very glad that Aurore still has hope of resurrection, and I'm looking forward to seeing her come back to life, but what I value more is you, Lumian Lee, the one who has gone through so many things with us and shared so many beautiful memories..."
At this point, Franca was at a loss for words, not knowing how to express the thoughts she hadn't yet spoken.
Jenna also stood up, pursing her lips before saying, "I would be happy to see Aurore resurrect through you, but I don't want to see you give up on yourself because of it.
"In this world, there are people who care about Lumian Lee, who like him, who value him!"
"Yes!" Franca echoed Jenna's words.
Lumian's blue eyes, now a lighter shade, looked at the two Demonesses, with a faint light flickering in their depths.
He didn't respond to Franca and Jenna's words, but he didn't object to or mock their statements either.

Just as Franca and Jenna were about to say something more, they suddenly saw Anthony give them a look, indicating that this was just right, and that Lumian should be left alone to calm down and think for a while. Too much comfort, encouragement, and confession would only bring about the opposite effect.
Uh... Franca closed her mouth.
She then realized a fact:
Anthony was here... Doesn't that mean he heard everything I said earlier?
Embarrassing!
EMBARRASSING!
Jenna sat back in her original position, trusting the Psychiatrist's judgment in this matter.
As for her own emotional outburst just now, she didn't feel shy about it. She knew Anthony had seen through it long ago.
Anthony sighed inwardly. As a normal, almost middle-aged man, he was very grateful to be a Psychiatrist, a Hypnotist. Otherwise, facing two Demonesses each with their own unique charm every day, and later adding a captain whose beauty was breathtaking, he would definitely be naturally enchanted and unknowingly lose his heart.
He felt that with this kind of training, even if he hadn't become a demigod yet, he could resist the Charm of an enemy Demoness of Despair for a longer time.
The embarrassed Franca instinctively searched for a topic. She let out an "Ah" and said, "That individual's arrangements are truly terrifying. It's not something we can escape or choose not to accept."
Jenna nodded in deep agreement.
Both Demonesses had been in significant situations before. They had personally experienced the celestial changes that Red Angel Medici had created in Fourth Epoch Trier. But the True Creator's arrangements, which came without warning and left no trace, completely surpassed their imagination. Just thinking about it a little would cause nightmares or sleepless nights.
Lumian responded in a low voice, "That being is a true god. I even suspect He's more than just a true god. At least Madam Magician's attitude towards Him is more respectful and fearful than towards true gods like the Eternal Blazing Sun.
"The Tarot Club, the Church of The Fool, and other related forces combined might not be able to prevent His arrangements. At most, they could detect anomalies a bit earlier and give warnings."
"Yeah, although there are many Angels around Mr. Fool's divine throne, they're still not enough to face a true god. Damn, why

would a true god focus on someone who wasn't even a demigod before?" Franca sighed and cursed.
She originally wanted to add, "With such a large gap in status, resistance is mostly futile. We can only make do for now, not letting this matter weigh on our minds, and try to use His arrangements to strengthen ourselves as much as possible." But after considering Lumian's current state, she swallowed these thoughts that arose from her own personality.
"Perhaps we'll only stop worrying about being arranged by that individual when Mr. Fool wakes up," Jenna said carefully.
"Yeah, when will Mr. Fool wake up?" Franca echoed with a sigh.
Suddenly, with her rich gaming experience, she had an idea.
She sat up straight and looked at Lumian, saying, "The lucky coins in my, Jenna's, and Ludwig's possession all seem to come from Mr. Fool's past bestowal, carrying his aura. Could it be... could it be that gathering all the lucky coins might awaken Mr. Fool?"
"If it were that simple, the Major Arcana card holders would have already collected the lucky coins and awakened Mr. Fool," Lumian pondered for a few seconds before saying, "Perhaps gathering the lucky coins is just a prerequisite, and there are still some things to be done afterward."
At this point, Anthony interjected, "I'm about to get a lucky coin too. The Knight of Swords promised to use it as payment."
"Four coins now..." Franca couldn't help but glance at Lumian.
In the past, she would definitely have teased him, but now, facing Lumian in this state, how could she bear to?
Lumian didn't show any disappointment. He looked out the window and said, "Madam Magician should be coming to me soon. I'll ask her about the true significance of the lucky coins."
"Mm." Franca touched her Traveler's Bag. "By the way, I want to ask Madam Magician to create an independent space in my Traveler's Bag to store that revolver. I can feel that it, like Black Tears, is continuously creating diseases and constantly spreading outward."
Her Cannon Gun had already combined with part of the boon power from Higdon that was intercepted in the special mirror world, and had not yet been renamed.
After saying this, Franca asked Lumian to place the entire room into the Bottle of Fiction, while she took out the corrupted Cannon Gun and used Magic Mirror Divination method to grasp its corresponding effects and negative impacts.
15:50
Before long, Franca obtained a relatively detailed answer:
"The corrupted Cannon Gun will continuously spread disease and decay within a three-kilometer radius, with random types of

diseases;
"The corrupted Cannon Gun can add either the Certain Death or Sure Hit effect to fired bullets, for a total of thirteen times, which can be stacked with the original Heavy Strike effect;
"If either the Certain Death or Sure Hit effect is triggered, the user will inevitably fall seriously ill for a period of time afterward. If a suitable healer isn't found, they might even die from it. If found, the severe illness state would last from a few hours to a day.
"After all the Certain Death and Sure Hit uses are exhausted, the negative effect of continuously spreading disease and decay will still exist, lasting for about a year."
As soon as she got the answer, Franca immediately stuffed the corrupted Cannon Gun back into the Traveler's Bag. Then, deliberately trying to liven up the atmosphere, she smiled and said, "If I were to use Impregnating Bullets with the Sure Hit effect, how would the enemy deal with that?"

Chapter 886: Conditions Met

Regarding Franca's question, Jenna and Anthony were amused but didn't know how to respond.

Lumian, however, seriously discussed the possible consequences. "Is pregnancy a big problem for Beyonders? It's not something they want, they can lose it immediately through intense combat."

Seeing that Lumian was willing to discuss the issue, Franca chuckled and said, "It's not that simple. After getting the Impregnating Bullet, I seriously researched related issues and consulted Madam Judgment.

"It's been confirmed that these Impregnating Bullets originate from the Great Mother's boon. Even demigods can't escape it. Once pregnant, it's very difficult to terminate without special abilities. And we all know that one way for Beyonders to eliminate excess Beyonder characteristics is to have others or themselves become pregnant, using the child's birth to take away corresponding Beyonder characteristics, though the result is uncontrollable.

"In other words, the target hit by this Impregnating Bullet, regardless of whether they're male or female, human or dog, will immediately become pregnant. The fetus will grow rapidly, tearing away part of the Beyonder characteristics or boon powers, thus causing instability in the target's state and a decline in strength."

"This, combined with the Sure Hit effect, is a bit terrifying..." Jenna spoke her mind. "One can only stay vigilant and preemptively replace oneself with a substitute."

Franca originally wanted to take the opportunity to tell Lumian, "If you don't want to be a Demoness, we can ask Mr. Sun for help through the Tarot Club, or I can give you a shot with an Impregnating Bullet to see if there's a way for you to give birth to a Demoness of Despair, hehehe." But considering her companion's emotional state, she gave up on this joke.

Moreover, she felt that Lumian would likely insist on being a Demoness for a while to see if there were truly signs of Aurore's soul fragments reviving.

"I've decided, the Cannon Gun will now be renamed the Inevitable Gun," Franca said after careful consideration, abandoning the name "Execution Gun" which she liked more and found more fun. She then asked Lumian, "What abilities does your bracelet have? By the way, I'll tell you about some Magic Mirror Divination targets that have been verified as safe."

"Including the one you mentioned that would cause social death but gives the most accurate divination results?" Jenna asked curiously.

Franca nodded solemnly. "Yes, but you'd better not pray to that one, otherwise... otherwise... Ah, I am the experience and lesson itself."

As she spoke, Franca couldn't help but glance at Anthony, finding that this Hypnotist showed no change in expression, as if he had already forgotten about the incident from back then.

With Franca's guidance, Lumian successfully completed his first Magic Mirror Divination, obtaining key information about the cheap silver bracelet:

"...Can use the Circle Inhabitant effect nine times, each Circle Inhabitant lasting no fewer than three times and no more than nine times.

"Circle Inhabitant can be used within a one-kilometer range, or targeted at a single individual, or applied to oneself. The range-type Circle Inhabitant trigger conditions cannot be harsh and can affect Angels in the corresponding area. The individual-type Circle Inhabitant can set some relatively harsh trigger conditions, but if the target's status is higher than one's own, the effect will be significantly reduced, even to the point of ineffectiveness.

"There are no restrictions on using Circle Inhabitant on oneself, and it can be restarted even if killed by an Angel.

"Only one 'Circle' can be maintained at the same time, and the same type of 'Circle' needs to cool down for three minutes before it can be created again.

"The Circle Inhabitant effect can last for a long time, unless the number of times is reached or the user actively removes it. For example, if a 'Circle' attached to oneself is set to restart near death, and there's no chance to trigger it afterward, it can last up to a year at most.

"Whether or not the Circle Inhabitant uses are exhausted, this bracelet contaminated by Inevitability powers will enhance the abilities of Fate Appropriation, Fate Exchange, Magnified Fate, and Compelling Fate to the Circle Inhabitant level. After about a year, the corresponding boon power will completely dissipate, turning this silver bracelet back into an ordinary accessory with curse remnants.

"Even just carrying this silver bracelet will unknowingly attract Inevitability boon recipients and be viewed with hostility by them.

"Each use of Circle Inhabitant will result in a period of bad luck, the specifics varying depending on the user's status."

Lumian held the cheap silver bracelet, repeatedly admiring it, as if waiting for the arrival of Inevitability boon recipients.

His pleasant voice, with a hint of magnetism, echoed, "If it's me, the bad luck would probably last about three hours. For you all, it

might be close to two days. For Anthony, it should be three days."
"Indeed, it suits you best," Franca said. "Along with the Sword of Courage, you're equivalent to a demigod of the Hunter, Demoness, and Inevitability pathways, and your abilities have even become mixed without much conflict."
At Sequence 4, this could definitely be considered outstanding!
"What should we name it?" Lumian looked down at the cheap silver-black bracelet.
"Circle of Fate?" Franca eagerly offered her opinion.
"Circle of Binding?" Jenna suggested, her eyes flickering slightly.
"Then let's call it the 'Circle of Binding'. It's more fitting for my current psychological and emotional state," Lumian said with a self-mocking tone.
Before Franca could express her disappointment, he put away the Circle of Binding and said carefully, "The topic of Impregnating Bullets reminded me of something."
"What is it?" Franca asked curiously.
Lumian's light blue and clear eyes lit up.
"When I first learned that the name of the Great Mother's Invisible Child of God was Omebella, the Termiboros inside me seemed a bit surprised.
"I originally thought it was because this evil god Angel had heard of this name in the endless cosmos and didn't expect Omebella to enter our world and become an Invisible Child of God. But now, the situation is that the Termiboros inside me was equivalent to Amon's true form.
"In other words, this had nothing to do with any knowledge or legends from the endless cosmos.
"Currently, there are only two possibilities. One is that Amon is deceiving me, preparing for when I investigate this matter in the future. The second is that He truly didn't expect it, and what He didn't expect was that the name of Omebella, the giant queen and Goddess of Harvest from the Second Epoch, would appear on the Great Mother's Invisible Child of God."
"Does Amon not expecting it mean that that individual also didn't expect it?" Jenna understood what Lumian was really trying to express.
Lumian's beautifully curved chin nodded slowly.
"My encounter with Father Montserrat was definitely His arrangement, to grasp the situation of the Great Mother's Invisible Child of God. But the name of the Great Mother's Invisible Child of God might not have been part of the arrangement. It was an accident, something He might not have expected either."
"You want to start from this incident to find a path with fewer

arrangements?" Anthony roughly understood Lumian's idea.
Lumian curled his lips into a smile, laughing once, causing Franca and others to feel a bit dazzled.
"His former identity was the Ancient Sun God who ended the era of ancient gods' rule. There are very few ancient secrets not grasped by Him, and this might be one of them."
Hearing this, Franca suddenly remembered that the True Creator worshiped by the Aurora Order was formerly the Ancient Sun God, the savior of humanity.
And according to intelligence gathered by the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society, the Ancient Sun God was very likely also a transmigrator!
Dammit, how could a transmigrator do such a thing as arranging an innocent person's life! After cursing inwardly, Franca said to Lumian, "Do you now meet all the conditions to come into contact with Omebella's remains and use them briefly?"
After Lumian consumed Omebella's umbilical cord remnants and achieved a slight fusion with it, he only needed to meet two more conditions—"having experienced betrayal by a direct relative" and "being female"—to be able to touch and briefly use the Grade 0 Sealed Artifact formed from Omebella's remains.
Lumian, abandoned by his playboy father, had long met the first condition, and now, he was truly female.
Lumian offered a curt acknowledgment.
"Moreover, Omebella's remains are in the New City of Silver, in this very city.
"I wonder what useful secrets I can discover from New Silver City's records and direct contact with the remains..."
Before Jenna and the others could respond, points of starlight appeared, and Madam Magician's figure was instantly outlined in the room.
This Major Arcana card holder seemed to have already foreseen the difficulty Franca was currently facing and directly extended her hand, saying, "Give me your Traveler's Bag."
...
It was early spring, and in the fields outside the New City of Silver, patches of wheat seedlings were still lush green in the twilight.
Madam Magician walked with Lumian on the path between the fields, breathing in the scent of soil and plants, feeling the cool breeze.
Having already obtained most of the information from the spirit world, she still patiently waited for Lumian to finish recounting his experiences before sighing.
"We've always said to be careful of that individual's arrangements,

to pay attention to coincidences around us, but what we didn't expect was that the arrangement happened from the very beginning, and gave many seemingly reasonable explanations, to the extent that we could only see traces of arrangements in specific events, completely overlooking the overall problem."
Lumian was still wearing the black cloak given by Franca, with his hair hidden in the attached hood.
He didn't blame the Major Arcana card holders for their thoughts, after all, that being was a true god.
Looking at the patches of green wheat seedlings tinged with golden red, he said in a low voice,
"Is it only when Mr. Fool awakens that we won't have to worry about every detail of our lives being arranged?"
"Yes, or quickly become an Angel. Although that won't exempt you from arrangements, you'll be able to detect many arrangements that rely too much on coincidence in a timely manner," Madam Magician tried hard not to let her eyes reveal emotions of pity.
Lumian fell silent for a moment before responding, "Are those lucky coins devices to awaken Mr. Fool?"
"Yes," Madam Magician didn't deny it. "You should have one too."
Lumian turned his head, using his eyes to express his question.
Madam Magician smiled and said, "That's the reward for the water from the Samaritan Women's Spring and the soil from in front of the ancient tomb of the Dream Festival.
"However, this needs to wait a few more days. There are time intervals for using these items."

Chapter 887: The Function of the Lucky Coins

Lumian roughly understood the meaning of Madam Magician's words.

The water he had previously taken from the Samaritan Woman's Spring and the soil from the area of the Dream Festival ancient tomb did have a reward, which was another lucky coin. However, the one giving the reward needed to wait until all of that water and soil had been used up and the effects confirmed before actually paying. Using these items needed to be done in batches, with time intervals between uses, rather than consuming them all at once—which might actually lead to unfavorable results.

"We still need to wait a few more days?" Lumian cast his gaze towards the golden-red tinted horizon and nodded gently, "I understand."

He wasn't impatient. Having been arranged for so long already, a few more days didn't matter.

Lumian probed further, "How many lucky coins need to be gathered in total to awaken Mr. Fool?"

"The lucky coins are tools, mediums, not the awakening itself. There are only five such coins in total," Madam Magician answered clearly, no longer speaking in riddles. "Once you get the last lucky coin, the five of you will be able to use your respective coins to enter Mr. Fool's dream and attempt to awaken him. Understand? The lucky coins are mediums to help you participate in Mr. Fool's dream.

"Of course, given your Sequences, even with the lucky coins, you can't decide when you can enter that dream or what you can do once inside. We'll need to assist you to ensure you can all go at the same time and maintain sufficient clarity and rationality."

Lumian listened quietly, his eyes slightly turning as he pursed his lips lightly.

"Mr. Fool's dream? We're responsible for awakening Mr. Fool?"

"Yes," Madam Magician answered with just one word.

She surveyed Lumian's profile, which took on a dreamlike beauty in the twilight glow, and inwardly sighed.

Lumian furrowed his brow slightly. "What do we need to do to awaken Mr. Fool? Haven't the previous holders of the lucky coins entered Mr. Fool's dream before? Haven't they made any attempts?"

Why does it have to be us?

"I don't know exactly what needs to be done to awaken Mr. Fool," Madam Magician said very frankly. "That's for you to figure out. We'll give you some suggestions based on your feedback."

She paused, then said in a teasing tone, "The previous holders of the lucky coins did indeed enter Mr. Fool's dream and made quite a few attempts, but they were successively discovered by that Celestial Worthy's spirit, either kicked out of the dream or had their actions restricted, unable to do much. One of them, after being kicked out of the dream the first time, would be kicked out again within a minute of re-entering the dream, regardless of whether they disguised themselves or behaved.

"You need to be careful too. The early stages are fine, but if you're later discovered and locked onto by that Celestial Worthy's spirit, you'll also be kicked out of the dream, or become mute, blind, or foolish."

After pondering for a moment, Lumian asked, "Are we the destined ones to awaken Mr. Fool?"

"Perhaps, perhaps not. We can't be sure yet," Madam Magician explained simply. "We can only say that the previous holders of the lucky coins would suddenly feel at some moment or in some scenario that they should trade away the lucky coin to someone else. This might be a hint from fate."

Lumian didn't ask any more questions. Instead, he mentioned that he now met all the conditions to come into contact with Omebella's remains, and finally asked, "Can I apply to the New City of Silver now?"

"I'll help you inform Mr. Sun. You just need to be prepared," Madam Magician said with a laugh. "Of course, you won't be able to actually take away Omebella's remains. That belongs to the New City of Silver. Grade 0 Sealed Artifacts are extremely precious anywhere. No one will gift it to you without appropriate compensation.

"What you'll be allowed to do is to review the relevant records of the City of Silver, come into contact with and study the item that the remains have become within the New City of Silver. If you encounter difficulties, with the approval of the New City of Silver's six-member council, you may be able to borrow that Grade 0 Sealed Artifact for a short time, to be returned within a certain period."

"That's already very good," Lumian said sincerely.

According to 007, an official Beyonder, even to use a Grade 1 Sealed Artifact, he had to submit a report in advance, obtain approval, and meet the corresponding conditions. As for Grade 0 Sealed Artifacts, that was something he couldn't even dream of.

And now, the New City of Silver might actually allow him to borrow Omebella's remains for a period of time!

Lumian "habitually" smoothed his hair and told Madam Magician

about Termiboros's, that is, Amon's true form's reaction when he first learned that the name of the Great Mother's Invisible Child of God was Omebella, along with his own speculations.
"This might indeed hide a very big and important secret, with some connection to that bird egg deep in the Underworld and the missing Madame Night Pualis," Madam Magician said, slightly raising both hands as if feeling the freshness and vigor of the early spring wheat seedlings.
Lumian stopped in front of a pond used for water storage and after a few seconds of silence, asked, "Madam, what is the true purpose and final result of Project Vortex?"
Madam Magician recounted in detail all the transactions and developments she understood, but because Lumian no longer had a false Angel status and had lost Mr. Fool's seal, unable to bear certain knowledge, she uniformly used descriptions like the evil gods outside the barrier, the one worshiped by the Brokers, and the Great Mother to refer to those great existences.
Upon hearing that Emperor Roselle had been resurrected as the Black Emperor, and then chose to die again to severely damage the great existence preaching in the name of "Truth", Lumian's expression changed several times, but in the end, he didn't say a word.
"I understand how you feel," Madam Magician comforted her feminized Minor Arcana card in a self-mocking tone. "I don't like that individual, and I really dislike His methods, but I have to admit, He is indeed preparing for our world to face the apocalypse, not just doing things that only benefit Him under the guise of a banner. So my feelings are very torn."
Lumian's expression remained cold, maintaining his silence.
Madam Magician didn't continue discussing this matter. She raised her right hand, letting points of starlight appear and fall towards Lumian's left chest, forming an illusory symbol composed of layers upon layers of doors.
This Major Arcana card holder said simply, "Since there's no need to seal an Angel, my power alone is enough to simply protect Aurore and the others' soul fragments. We don't need to trouble Mr. Fool, and besides, if Mr. Fool were to seal it, it might actually affect the gradual revival of Aurore's soul fragments through your female state.
"Well, if you're unwilling to take the lucky coin into Mr. Fool's dream, we won't force you. I'll still help reinforce the seal periodically."
Lumian smiled bitterly. "That individual has already made the choice for me."

He remained silent for a while, his slightly paler lips moving a few times.
"Can being in the Demoness state really allow Aurore's soul fragments to gradually revive? Is this truly the only way to resurrect Aurore?"
"It may not be the only way. At least, I can't give you an accurate judgment. Only Mr. Fool could provide the corresponding answer," Madam Magician neither denied nor confirmed that individual's statement.
Her current knowledge and abilities were not sufficient to support her refutation.
The only thing she could be certain of was: "This is indeed a way to resurrect Aurore, just that the final resurrection won't be completely whole."
"Why must it be Aurore's soul fragments gradually reviving, and not the soul fragments of other villagers? There are many soul fragments sealed within me, why is Aurore the most special one?" This was now Lumian's greatest concern.
Madam Magician said, "Aurore's soul fragments simultaneously meet three conditions. First, she was a Beyonder, having undergone the transformation of Beyonder characteristics on her spirit. Second, she was corrupted by Inevitability powers. Third, at the end of the ritual, her soul fragments received protection from that individual or several ones, so they're in relatively better condition, the kind that can gradually revive.
"Therefore, her soul fragments are indeed the most special among all the soul fragments within you. The remaining soul fragments might only be able to exist in the form of half-human, half-object puppet soldiers when you become an Angel of the Hunter pathway in the future."
Lumian thought for a while and said, "If I were now a Beyonder of those three pathways of the Great Mother, I wouldn't doubt that Aurore's soul fragments could gradually revive within me, but a Demoness doesn't have the symbol of new life..."
"But the Demoness has the authority of resurrection. Have you forgotten that one of the descriptions of the Demoness of Unaging is that she's bizarrely hard to kill, skilled in resurrection and rebirth?" Madam Magician reminded him.
Lumian quietly exhaled and said, "If I continue to advance to become a Demoness of Unaging, would the revival effect of Aurore's soul fragments be better?"
Madam Magician smiled and said, "There's no need to deliberately pursue that. When you later jump to Sequence 2 of the Demoness pathway, you'll similarly gain all the abilities and characteristics

of the Demoness of Unaging, unless you find a way to separate out the corresponding Unaging Beyonder characteristic yourself."
Seeing Lumian nod slightly, Madam Magician smiled and asked, "As a demigod who has switched pathways, you should have some special, mixed abilities now, right?"
Lumian offered a curt acknowledgment and said, "The most special ability is the application of fire.
"On the one hand, I can use a Hunter's blazing-white flames and the Demoness's inherent black flames separately. On the other hand, I can fuse them together for an explosive effect. This can both physically destroy human bodies and objects, and ignite spirituality, burning spiritual bodies, comprehensively damaging and destroying a target.
"Yes, after the fusion of the Demoness of Despair Beyonder characteristic and the Hunter pathway Beyonder characteristic, new mystical knowledge appeared, calling this black flame that suppresses irritability and madness the 'Fire of Destruction'."

Chapter 888: Changes in Abilities from Pathway Switching

After describing the Fire of Destruction, Lumian frowned and said, "I've heard that members of the Demoness sect have a tradition of turning their lovers into females. Are there no Beyonders of the Hunter pathway among their lovers?"

This question was essentially still asking "Why me?"

Couldn't they just find any Sequence 5 of the Hunter pathway, seduce them to jump to Demoness of Despair, and satisfy the requirement of "yin contains yang, yang contains yin"? Why did I have to be arranged?

"Perhaps only you could very easily enter the area around the Samaritan Woman's Spring and obtain the remnant aura of the Blood Emperor, thus having mystical similarity with 0-01." Madam Magician fully understood what Lumian was concerned about.

Lumian continued asking, as if talking to himself, "The Red Angel has ways to control 0-01 without relying on mystical similarity. Since that individual has no selfish motives and isn't afraid of the Red Angel's revenge, why not directly reinvest in Him, instead of grooming a 'weakling' like me?"

Isn't this a waste of time?

Madam Magician glanced at the field ridge under her feet.

"I can answer this for you. First, the Red Angel can't get as close to the top powers of the two Calamity pathways as you can, unless His next step isn't to reclaim 0-01 and become the Red Priest, but to find a way to replace the Primordial Demoness. Second, the birth of a Red Priest is inevitably accompanied by competition, chaos, and disaster. Only through multi-party competition can a Red Priest emerge in the shortest time in the best way. If only the Red Angel were to walk this path, it wouldn't go smoothly."

"Am I competing with Him?" Lumian curled his lips in a self-mocking smile. "Then I should thank that individual for giving me this qualification."

As for ability, that was still far off.

Madam Magician continued, "Many members of the Demoness sect indeed have lovers from the Hunter pathway, but they rarely let these male lovers switch pathways and become female at Sequence 5. On the one hand, there are very few members of the Demoness sect who can get their hands on two Demoness of Despair Beyonder characteristics. On the other hand, they seem to be avoiding similar things. As far as I know, among the demigod-level Demonesses, only one was formerly a Hunter."

"Who?" Lumian immediately became alert like a Hunter.
Madam Magician smiled and said, "The Demoness of Cyan, Yalenna.
"She is a Sequence 3 Demoness of Unaging. Her mother is the leader of the Demoness sect, the Demoness of Gray Judith. Her father was a Hunter, who later went missing, suspected to have been killed by the Demoness of Gray."
Lumian pondered for a moment and said, "Could the Demoness of Gray have also been a Hunter before?
"Her twin sister Krismona was born female, born a Demoness. As a contrast, is it possible that She was born male, born a Hunter, until She transformed into a Demoness at Sequence 4?
"The Demoness of Black only mentioned that the Demoness of Black was Sequence 9 at birth, but never said that her Sequence 9 equaled Assassin."
"It's possible, but currently unverifiable. The Demoness of Gray is older than all of our Tarot Club's Major Arcana card holders combined. We don't know much about Her," Madam Magician said, a hint of a smile appearing on her face as if she had thought of something.
Is that so? I thought you were an Angel from the early Fifth Epoch, given that your teacher was Mr. Door, the strongest King of Angels of the Fourth Epoch... Lumian didn't voice these words about a woman's age.
He began to walk slowly again, pondering as he spoke, "Is the Demoness sect, or rather the Primordial Demoness's hatred for pure female Demonesses really due to inner distortion? Is there no other mystical reason?"
Pure female Demonesses apparently wouldn't have the chance to touch the power at the top of the two Calamity pathways, so they should pose the least threat to the Primordial Demoness.
"Inner distortion is one reason, but my intuition tells me it's not the whole reason," Madam Magician said, turning her head to look at the New City of Silver where lights were gradually coming on. "The Seven of Cups is about to advance to Demoness of Affliction. You can try to get some intelligence on this from Krismona's remnant projection."
Lumian didn't continue this topic, instead returning to discuss the changes in his abilities after becoming a Demoness of Despair.
This was also something he had to do after his condition initially stabilized.
"At the Demoness of Despair stage, Disease has evolved into Plague that can cover a range of three kilometers. I currently have mastered three types of plagues. One is derived from the original

Disease, targeting the flesh of relatively common creatures, mainly infecting organs such as the heart, brain, and lungs. From the incubation period to the outbreak of symptoms to becoming severe, it only takes about ten seconds, and then within another minute, it can cause the target to deteriorate to near death. The specific time varies depending on the enemy's status and constitution.

"The second type of plague is Weakening, originating from the mystical pathogen inherent in Black Tear. It can gradually strip away the target's strength until even their heart is too weak to beat. At the same time, it causes a gradual loss of spirituality. In other words, it can not only target relatively common creatures but also affect special creatures and even the dead. Any target with spirituality or relying on spirituality will gradually weaken because of it.

"The third type of plague is Rigidity. Over time, it causes even zombies to become rigid and stiff, becoming inflexible. This is a more mystically oriented plague.

"The fusion of Hunter traits with the plagues has given these mystical pathogens a certain resistance to fire. They won't quickly wither away under fire burning conditions and can persist for a longer time. Among them, the Weakening plague can inherently survive in high temperatures for a period, and its current fire resistance is the strongest among the three plagues.

"For dealing with these plagues, the burning of Demoness black flames and freezing over a certain range are better methods.

"I can also create my own unique plague varieties by combining my own traits, corresponding mystical knowledge, specific ideas and experiments, and possibly required special materials. This takes a long time and can't yield results quickly. But regardless, a Demoness's Plague can only target things with spirituality and cannot cause rocks or metals to weather, rust, or decay like the demigods of the Order of All Extinction.

"In using Precision, a Hunter's Precision can help me maintain two types of plagues simultaneously, but it requires three to four times the spirituality consumption of maintaining a single plague."

Madam Magician nodded lightly, not interrupting Lumian's self-analysis.

"The Demoness of Despair's mastery of the mirror world and mirror magic has reached a considerably deep stage. I can locate mirrors within a five-kilometer range and mirrors I've visited before. I can traverse freely in the mirror world and transmit information through the mirror world to those located mirrors, displaying it. This is much more convenient than messengers, but

there's a possibility of the information being intercepted by mirror world creatures. Some curses need to be attached to the information to avoid most troubles.
"I can also use located mirrors to project myself there, looking just like the real thing. Currently, this projection has distance limitations and cannot exceed a city.
"A Hunter's Precision has also fused with this Mirror Projection ability, allowing me to complete three to five projections simultaneously, with each projection having some power and able to accomplish some things, though they cannot leave the range reflected by the corresponding mirror."
When fighting against the Order of All Extinction demigod, Higdon, Lumian had used the power of the special mirror world to create many Mirror Projections. If Higdon had ignored them at that time, these illusions and projections could have caused a certain degree of damage!
"Other mirror magic, such as Mirror Maze, Mirror Substitution, and Magic Mirror Divination, have also reached the level of Sequence 4. Among them, curses completed through mirrors include normal types, those fused with Cull that can erupt fiercely in an extremely short time, and those mixed with the power of Inevitability that can complete fate-related curses," Lumian pondered as he spoke. "Fate-related curses can put the target in a state of misfortune for a period of time. This is not easily noticed by them and is used against enemies who inherently have strong curse prevention abilities."
Lumian paused, then continued, "Like other Demonesses of Despair, if enemies can't replace themselves with a substitution before I lock onto them and complete the curse, they won't be able to transfer or share the damage even if they have a Mirror Substitution or Paper Figurine Substitute.
"The Demoness's spider silk has also changed, becoming more solid, more tough, able to complete more tasks, including restraining, binding, interfering, transmitting pleasure, black flames, and curses. At the same time, the fusion of Hunter traits has made these spider silks sharper, able to directly cause a certain degree of damage.
"My hair is the source of spider silk. If an enemy's body is touched by my hair, the corresponding part will experience some petrification symptoms.
"Weakness Investigation is no longer limited to discovering weaknesses and vulnerabilities in the flesh, soul, and defenses, as well as fate streams that can lead to death, but also includes the target's emotional and desire weaknesses and trigger points.

"Cull has fused with the Demoness pathway's Mighty Blow, capable of bringing more terrifying damage. I can take out some physically fragile demigods in one strike."
"Physically fragile demigods often have many mystically oriented life-saving abilities, or make it impossible for you to find their true form," Madam Magician reminded at this point.
Lumian nodded, indicating he would remember.
"Other abilities include black magic like Invisibility, the ability to manipulate frost, Wand Substitution, basic divination abilities, which are all the same as a normal Demoness of Despair.
"Instigation and Provocation have fused together, granting me the ability to use language and attached mystical power to stir up the target's emotions and desires, making them do what I anticipate.
"Pleasure can be combined with Cull and Precision...
"...
"That's about it."
Madam Magician nodded thoughtfully and remarked, "Jumping to a neighboring pathway indeed brings many strange changes and mixed abilities. This is not something that can be achieved by using the neighboring pathways' Sealed Artifacts."
Lumian gave an affirmative sound, then asked, "Should we still have Franca continue undercover in the Demoness sect?"

Chapter 889: Intelligence on the Demoness Sect

Faced with Lumian's question, Madam Magician pondered for a few seconds before saying, "Whether it's investigating the state of the Primordial Demoness, exploring the secrets of the deepest layer of the special mirror world, uncovering the essence of the mirror self, or mastering the secret of resurrection and rebirth of the Demoness of Unaging, it's impossible to bypass the Demoness Sect.

"These are equally important for you now.

"So, my opinion is to let the Two of Cups continue to contact the Demoness of Black, while you lurk in the shadows to prevent accidents.

"The Demoness Sect has probably already suspected the Two of Cups' background and intentions, but I'm not sure what countermeasures they will take. If they want to use the Two of Cups to do some things and achieve certain goals, we can take advantage of such arrangements to peek into the secrets of the Demoness Sect and the special mirror world, and incidentally obtain subsequent resources for the Demoness pathway. If they prepare to eliminate hidden dangers and wipe out the Two of Cups, you, lurking in the shadows, must immediately act and quickly rescue the Two of Cups. The mission with the Demoness Sect shall then end there.

"This is indeed already a fairly high-risk matter. Both the Two of Cups and you have the right to refuse."

Lumian listened attentively and then smiled and said, "I think the Demoness Sect won't do anything to Franca for the time being. It's more likely they'll use her. Otherwise, in the underground mausoleum of Morora, Julie in her divine descent state wouldn't have thrown me out of the special mirror world. And after I achieved my goal, obtained the Black Tear, and returned from Morora, the Demoness of Black wouldn't have been so easily patronized by Franca."

Madam Magician nodded almost imperceptibly.

"If this isn't that individual's arrangement, it means the Primordial Demoness also hopes for a Beyonder who harbors hope for Tudor's resurrection and is closer to the top powers of the two Calamity pathways than Her to grow up according to the method currently considered closest to the correct answer, in order to achieve a goal that is very important and crucial to Her."

Lumian twisted his mouth and said in a self-mocking tone, "One of the ways to counter a true god's arrangement is to place oneself in the plans of another or several true gods, whether those plans are

good or bad."
"The principle is the same as balancing the corruption on oneself."
Madam Magician shook her head and smiled. "But you should remember that before Mr. Fool awakens, no true god can compete with that individual in arranging this matter, even if several Sequence 0 true gods unite. Of course, this can indeed interfere with and influence that individual's arrangements, giving you a chance to detect anomalies in a timely manner or in advance."
Lumian nodded solemnly. "Whether Franca continues the Demoness Sect mission or not, I will follow up on these matters. Madam, can you give me more intelligence about the Demoness Sect? The Demoness of Black only reveals very little to Franca each time."
Madam Magician said in an appreciative tone, "You now indeed have the ability and mindset to independently handle one aspect of affairs. If Mr. Fool wakes up, you are completely qualified to draw a Major Arcana card.
"From now on, matters concerning the Demoness Sect will be consolidated under you. If you need assistance or want to mobilize resources from other Major Arcana card holders, you can find me or Judgment at any time.
"Well, because the Demoness of Unaging can be resurrected, can be reborn, is difficult to kill completely, and stays forever young without aging, she can live for many, many years, even longer than the lifespan of Angels from many pathways. So, if we don't count Sequence 4 Demonesses of Despair, and only consider the accumulated number of currently living Sequence 3 and Sequence 2 Beyonders, the Demoness Sect has more than any orthodox god church.
"In this regard, only Sanguine, whose lives are equally long, can compare with them, but still fall short.
"Of course, a large part of the high-level power of orthodox god churches is in Grade 0 and Grade 1 Sealed Artifacts and Holy Artifacts. If encountering major disasters, those Sealed Artifacts and Holy Artifacts can also play the role of corresponding high-level beings to some extent, and a large part of them can be relatively smoothly converted into Beyonder characteristics that rapidly strengthen reserve forces."
Lumian recalled and said, "According to the Demoness of Black, at Sequence 3, one can name oneself with a color. There are thirteen such 'Color Demonesses' in total."
"Among them, four are Angels, Sequence 2 Angels. In this respect, the Demoness Sect is inferior to orthodox god churches, because their high-level members must be Demonesses, and there are no

angels from other pathways. Orthodox god churches, on the other hand, can potentially use Grade 0 Sealed Artifacts or Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristics of other pathways they possess to create Sequence 1 Archangels." Madam Magician gave a detailed introduction.
"Why can't there be Sequence 1 Demonesses?" Lumian expressed his confusion.
Madam Magician chuckled. "What I'm about to say is one of the highest-level mystical knowledge of the paths of the divine.
"Each pathway has its own distinct Uniqueness. Occupying and accommodating the Uniqueness is the key to becoming a true god, but it's not the only condition. A true Sequence 0 also needs all the Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristics of its pathway to support the Uniqueness, which is three in total. So, with the Sequence 0 Primordial Demoness, there can't be Sequence 1 Demonesses of Apocalypse, only Sequence 2 Demonesses of Catastrophe.
"Similarly, orthodox god churches can't have Sequence 1 Archangels corresponding to their own deities. Well, except for some pathways with special abilities."
As Lumian suddenly came to a realization, he very keenly asked,
"I can't advance to Sequence 1 of the Demoness pathway and become a Demoness of Apocalypse unless the Primordial Demoness falls before that?"
"Correct." Madam Magician specifically reminded, "There's only one Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristic left for the Hunter pathway. The Red Angel has already occupied two, which is why He can become a King of Angels again."
"Is the definition of a King of Angels occupying multiple Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristics or accommodating the Uniqueness?" Lumian had some understanding of the concept of King of Angels before, but today was the first time he clearly recognized what this title represented.
Magician nodded. "Yes, whether it's occupying two Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristics, or three Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristics, or accommodating the Uniqueness, as well as the Uniqueness plus one Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristic, the Uniqueness plus two Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristics, they are all Kings of Angels.
"The only King of Angels composed of the Uniqueness plus three Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristics was my mentor, Mr. Door, but He used His own sealing authority to resist the tendency to converge. If not for this, after three Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristics and the Uniqueness are placed in the same Beyonder's body, they would inevitably converge rapidly, and the

possessor would either immediately become a god, lose control on the spot, or die directly."
No wonder Mr. Door was the highest-ranking nobleman in the Tudor Empire... Lumian asked with undisguised concern, "Where is the last Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristic of the Hunter pathway?"
Is Red Angel Medici about to get it?
"It's rumored to be with the Primordial Demoness." Madam Magician didn't conceal this intelligence, "And the one who reportedly brought that Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristic to the Primordial Demoness was the Demoness of Black, Clarice."
Lumian nodded thoughtfully.
Madam Magician continued to introduce the situation of the Demoness Sect, "Besides the Demoness of Gray Judith, the Demoness Sect has three other Sequence 2 Demonesses of Catastrophe, namely the Demoness of Yellow, the Demoness of Blue, and the Demoness of Purple.
"There are currently nine Sequence 3 Demonesses of Unaging. Besides the Demoness of Black and the Demoness of Cyan that you know, there are also White, Scarlet, Silver, Green, Gold, Brown, Orange..."
After hearing this, Lumian keenly noticed a problem. "Trier with its special mirror world should be one of the most important areas in the eyes of the Demoness Sect, yet they didn't send a Demoness of Catastrophe to be in charge, leaving all affairs to the Demoness of Black..."
This doesn't seem normal.
Or, is one of the Yellow, Blue, or Purple Demonesses of Catastrophe hiding in Trier?
"Moreover, the one responsible for keeping the Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristic of the Hunter pathway and using methods like sacrifice to give it to the Primordial Demoness was also only the Sequence 3 Demoness of Black, not any Demoness of Catastrophe. Wasn't the Demoness Sect worried at the time that the Demoness of Black's status wasn't high enough, her strength wasn't enough, and something might go wrong?" Madam Magician reminded Lumian that there was another detail that was problematic.
After exchanging intelligence about the Demoness Sect for a while longer, Madam Magician looked at the sky that had completely darkened and said, "Tomorrow, Mr. Sun will send someone to take you to the Twin Towers to read the records the City of Silver has on Omebella's remains and to make contact with that Grade 0 Sealed Artifact.

"After that, you decide for yourselves when to return to Trier."
"Yes, Madam Magician." Lumian replied, watching as this holder of a Major Arcana card turned into points of starlight and disappeared before his eyes.
...
As the night settled in, Franca paced in the living room, muttering to herself, "Why hasn't Lumian come back yet?"
Wasn't he just reporting his encounter to Madam Magician and exchanging intelligence?
It's been so long!
Jenna was also a bit worried. She walked to the window and looked out at the street.
Suddenly, her gaze froze.
"There." She pointed to the top of the bell tower attached to The Fool's cathedral.
Franca took a few steps over and saw at the top of the bell tower, in a place without any railings, sat a woman wearing a black cloak, with some black hair falling down, delicate and fine features, and a grand and radiant face.
It was Lumian.
At this moment, Lumian was sitting there, legs dangling outside, gaze quietly looking down.
Franca and Jenna exchanged a glance and quickly rushed to The Fool's cathedral, climbing up the bell tower.
Seeing Lumian's back, they didn't immediately inquire about the situation, but remained quiet, each walking to one side, following Lumian's line of sight to gaze at what he was intently watching.
It was the giant buildings that had lit up with yellowish lights in the dark night, the various mushrooms that were faintly visible in the streetlight glow, the silhouettes of giants and half-giants behind glass windows, raised wine glasses, wisps of cooking smoke, songs from nearby squares, the noise spilling out from bars, and the faint sounds of joy and laughter from different houses.

Chapter 890: Murder

The next morning.

Lumian and the others had just finished breakfast in their room and were waiting for Ludwig to clean up the rest when they heard the doorbell ring.

Outside the door was a half-giant youth about two meters tall, with slightly longer arms and legs, short curly brown hair that looked fluffy.

He had thick eyebrows and big eyes, with a square face. After his gaze swept over Lumian, Franca and Jenna, it involuntarily lowered to look at his own toes as he said, "I'm here to find Lumian Lee, uh, possibly Ms. Lumina Lee."

He spoke in ancient Feysac.

"That's me," Lumian understood this was probably the messenger sent by Mr. Sun to take him to the Twin Towers of the New City of Silver.

That Major Arcana card holder seemed to have deliberately found a youth, to ensure the height difference wouldn't be too dramatic.

The youth let out a sigh of relief and said awkwardly, "I've been ordered by the six-member council to take you to see Elder Derrick Berg at the Twin Towers."

"Alright," Lumian nodded to Jenna and Franca, then followed the youth out of the hotel towards the Twin Towers located in a corner of the New City of Silver.

Along the way, the half-giant youth walked slightly ahead to the side, his back somewhat stiff, occasionally showing a tendency to swing the same arm and leg together, as if he had almost forgotten how to walk normally.

He would turn his head to glance at Lumian from time to time, but not knowing what to say, he could only quickly turn his head back.

Halfway through the journey, he finally thought of a suitable topic.

Half turning his body, he asked Lumian, "Aren't, aren't you worried that I might be a bad person? Maybe what I said about the six-member council's order and going to see Elder Derrick Berg at the Twin Towers is all a lie to trick you?"

I could kill thirty of your kind in one breath... Lumian only thought to himself, without saying it out loud.

On the one hand, they were both followers of Mr. Fool and not too familiar, so there was no need to mock. On the other hand, Lumian felt that if his sister Aurore was here, she definitely wouldn't answer in a similar way.

He smiled lightly and said, "I'm not worried, because this is the New City of Silver."

The half-giant youth suddenly became very happy and said in a tone of heartfelt pride,
"Yes, the Lord has always taught us to be kind and restrained. Our New City of Silver strictly cracks down on all kinds of crimes, especially guarding against theft, fraud and other such behaviors..."
12:12
"Yes, the Lord has always taught us to be kind and restrained. Our New City of Silver strictly cracks down on all kinds of crimes, especially guarding against theft, fraud and other such behaviors..."
The half-giant youth opened up and began to talk endlessly about how Mr. Fool originally sent an Angel to save the City of Silver, how he gave the City of Silver this promised land, and how they, the people of the City of Silver, built the New City of Silver.
Lumian had heard these stories repeatedly when drinking in the New City of Silver before, but he wasn't impatient now, letting the half-giant youth continue his smooth narration.
He heard happiness of peace and tranquility in the other's description.
In this exchange, the two arrived at the Twin Towers, the core buildings of the New City of Silver. The left tower had a pointed top and housed public facilities such as the library, while the right tower had a round top and was where the six-member council that governed the New City of Silver worked.
Lumian instinctively turned his gaze towards the round tower and noticed that in the cracks between the bricks near the ground, tufts of black hair-like plants had grown out, sometimes drooping, sometimes swaying lightly as if blown by a gentle breeze.
When he came last time, Lumian had also noticed these black plants but didn't pay much attention. This time, however, he felt a kind of blood connection.
We are all parts or rather continuations of the life of the Goddess of Harvest, Omebella!
Even when sealed, does a Grade 0 Sealed Artifact still have some influence on the outside world? Lumian withdrew his gaze and followed the half-giant youth into the pointed tower.
They walked on large black stone slabs, passing huge pillars, and came to the library on the third floor.
In front of the intimidating bookshelves stood a tall man wearing a simple white robe.
The man was over two meters tall, with neatly combed brownish-yellow hair. He looked only about 22 or 23 years old, but had a very calm demeanor and an overwhelming aura. He was clearly Mr.

Sun, whom Lumian had met last time, one of the top figures of the Church of The Fool.
"Elder Berg, Ms. Lumina is here," the half-giant youth said respectfully.
Mr. Sun, whose name was Derrick Berg, looked at Lumian and nodded, saying, "Follow me."
Lumian politely replied, "Thank you."
The half-giant youth then waved and walked towards the door. After a few steps, he turned around and called out to Lumian's back, "My name is Rugest!"
After saying this, Rugest quickly turned and ran down the stairs.
Lumian followed Mr. Sun deep into the New City of Silver library, entering the innermost secret room where a stack of documents made up of scattered records was placed.
"These are all the records regarding the 'Gift of the Land'. I have already translated them into ancient Feysac for you," Mr. Sun said simply, sitting down in a position against the wall and falling silent, as if he had turned into a statue.
Lumian understood this was to guard against any accidents that might occur while he was reading the materials, so he nodded lightly, sat down at the table, and picked up the stack of new papers.
He read very slowly, taking nearly half an hour to roughly understand the relationship between the Goddess of Harvest, Omebella, and the City of Silver.
In the Second Epoch, in the era when the ancient gods ruled the earth and sky, the City of Silver belonged to the Giant King's Court, and all its people were slaves to the giants.
But unlike other human vassal powers of the Giant King's Court, the City of Silver's situation was considerably better, because they believed in and followed the subsidiary god of the Giant King, the ancient god, the Giant Queen, the Goddess of Harvest—Omebella.
According to the City of Silver's records, the Giant Queen Omebella had descended to their city multiple times, displaying two images.
One image corresponded to light and goodness, with "the harvest's grace, life's precious embrace" as the core of faith, viewing the people of the City of Silver as Her own children, always ensuring bountiful harvests, abundant reproduction of livestock and poultry, and rapid population growth. This was the main reason why the people of City of Silver rarely suffered innocent slaughter and did not lack food.
The other would bring desolation and death. At that time, all the people of Certain Death knew phrases like "extreme harvest is inevitably accompanied by extreme desolation", "only life can quell

the land's wrath", "death, like new life, is a common and beautiful thing, not to be feared", "we have accepted the land's gifts, so we must pay the corresponding price".
If Omebella descended in this form, She would inevitably demand bloody sacrifices, with large numbers of humans as offerings. Even if the people of the City of Silver did these things, sacrificing their own relatives, they would sometimes still suffer famines lasting up to a year—if they didn't do so, the famine might last three to five years.
Is this what the era ruled by ancient gods was like? Even the City of Silver, which was relatively well off, was like this... Lumian turned to the next page.
This page recorded the Giant King's Court's words of praise for the Giant Queen Omebella. What caught Lumian's attention most was one sentence: "The noble Queen used Her maternal nature to help the great King calm His emotions..."
What does this mean? Maternal nature... helping the Giant King—this ancient god—expel excess Beyonder characteristics and regain some sanity by giving birth to children? Lumian pondered as he continued reading.
After another fifteen minutes, he turned to the stage of the Giant King's Court's rapid decline.
The City of Silver, which had obtained another divine-level Sealed Artifact, had learned of the fall of the ancient god, the Giant King and feared falling into the hands of the more brutal Devil Monarch.
In such anxiety and unease, on a night without the crimson moon, the Giant Queen Omebella appeared outside the City of Silver.
This time, She did not descend directly, but walked over step by step.
She was in poor condition. She asked the believers of the City of Silver to perform a ritual, sacrificing half of their people to help Her replenish Her life force.
The record of the subsequent situation was vague, but the result was clear: "That night, man slew god, subject slew ruler, child slew mother."
In other words, the bizarrely resurrected Omebella finally died at the hands of the betraying believers of the City of Silver? Lumian wasn't too surprised.
After that day, the City of Silver discovered that Omebella's remains didn't have Beyonder characteristics in the true sense, but still possessed powerful force and terrifying authority. They completely buried this history, hid this secret, and even after converting to belief in the Ancient Sun God, they didn't tell that

Lord the true origin of the divine-level Sealed Artifact, Gift of the Land, until Mr. Fool's Angel of Redemption came to save them.
At this point, all records of Omebella—the Goddess of Harvest—ended. Next came information about the Sealed Artifact—Gift of the Land.
"Gift of the Land can naturally create an edible plant in any environment and promote its growth, reproduction, and abundant harvest within a fifty-kilometer range.
"Gift of the Land will turn all dead humans within a fifty-kilometer range into terrible evil spirits, unless that human died by being murdered by a direct relative. Those who have eaten the food it creates and have a strong connection with it will turn into evil spirits within three hundred kilometers..."
Seeing this record different from the official Sealed Artifact description, Lumian suddenly raised his head and looked at Mr. Sun sitting by the wall.
He asked in confusion, "Every dead human will turn into an evil spirit?
"Even those who were below Sequence 5 in life?"
As far as Lumian knew, evil spirits were the strongest among soul creatures. Even the weakest should be at the level of Sequence 5, while the strong ones could be equivalent to demigods.
"Yes." Mr. Sun nodded steadily.
Wh— the ability of the Gift of the Land is terrifying. This is equivalent to being able to mass-produce Sequence 5 Beyonders, some of whom should even be demigods... *Is this what a Grade 0 Sealed Artifact is?* Lumian subconsciously began to evaluate from a combat power perspective.
He probed, "What's the maximum number of dead humans that can turn into evil spirits at one time?"
"We've never tried," Mr. Sun replied with a solemn expression.
Lumian suddenly realized and quickly apologized, "I apologize for my rudeness."
He continued reading the materials about the divine-level Sealed Artifact; in the New City of Silver, Grade 0 Sealed Artifacts were called divine-level Sealed Artifacts.

Chapter 891: Gift of the Land

"The Gift of the Land can make the soil fertile within a 300-kilometer range, make water flow abundant, increase the tendency for life to reproduce, and prevent even the most unfavorable environmental conditions from stopping life from bearing offspring, only reducing the quantity and frequency...

"The Gift of the Land will randomly cause the land within a 300-kilometer range to become desolate, crops to fail completely, and plants to wither. Unless the desolation effect ends, this land will not become fertile again. This can be suppressed by Angel-level abilities similar to purification, limiting the desolation to a very small area, unable to spread...

"If actively used, the Gift of the Land can cause all life within a 30-kilometer range to rapidly drain away until death. Similar abilities outside this domain will also gradually wither and be weakened because of this. Lifeless dead who enter this domain will quickly return to the earth...

"The Gift of the Land can also fill a 50-kilometer range with various toxins, grow various Beyonder plants beneficial to itself. Similarly, it can tame all animals without higher intelligence in this area, and strengthen the tendency for every Beyonder to lose control...

"Through contact, the Gift of the Land can create dolls from soil, plants, lava, ores, and metals, and give them some life and power. The strongest dolls do not exceed Sequence 3, with a maximum of nine demigod-level dolls...

"The Gift of the Land can transform the environment, making even the Abyss suitable for human survival...

"The wielder of the Gift of the Land will truly become one with the land, forests, water flows, mountains, ores, etc. within range, and can use them to traverse, with varying speeds...

"Every time one is hit by the Gift of the Land, they will face a test of losing control, as well as a test of death. If unable to pass, they will either lose control on the spot or die directly...

"The Gift of the Land can temporarily turn the wielder into a mythical creature, but requires the wielder to be able to withstand the impact of mystical knowledge and mad thoughts brought by the corresponding Mythical Creature form...

"The Gift of the Land can give the wielder all female characteristics...

"Life that comes into contact with the Gift of the Land will either be cured of all injuries and diseases, or die instantly. Which outcome occurs cannot be divined beforehand. According to prophecy, females with Omebella's bloodline who have suffered betrayal by

direct relatives will not experience the instant death outcome...
"Those who do not meet the above conditions, even if lucky enough to receive the healing effect, cannot use the Gift of the Land for more than one minute afterwards, otherwise they will lose control or die...
"Those who meet the conditions will still suffer other negative effects...
"Those who understand the above information, if they do not possess godhood, are likely to become pregnant in the coming period, conceiving an unknown creature...
"Note: Except for the prophecy part, all descriptions are based on the City of Silver's experience, lessons, and understanding."
After reading the information about the Gift of the Land, Lumian finally understood why only females with Omebella's bloodline who had suffered betrayal by direct relatives could touch, pick up, and briefly use this Grade 0 Sealed Artifact. For others, it was purely gambling with their lives, unless they had no other way to heal their injuries and diseases, or faced a crisis they couldn't normally overcome. Otherwise, no one would try.
But it's truly very powerful, worthy of being a Grade 0 Sealed Artifact. And if used briefly, the negative effects are not completely unacceptable. It's just necessary to suppress the desolation effect and guard against enemies turning into even more terrifying evil spirits after death... Lumian silently mused to himself, focusing his attention on the most crucial content.
That was the part about Omebella, in poor condition, walking to the City of Silver seeking sacrifice.
According to Madam Magician, at this time Omebella had already had Her identity and destiny stolen. The people of the City of Silver shouldn't have been able to know that the female giant before them was the Goddess of Harvest, Omebella.
But in the records, the residents of the City of Silver undoubtedly knew it was Omebella, without even a hint of doubt or raising any objections.
They considered it a fact that needed no verification, reflected in the record as just two short sentences, with the purpose of describing that Omebella arrived at the City of Silver by walking.
Lumian raised his head, looking at Mr. Sun seated against the wall, and asked thoughtfully, "Which image did the Goddess of Harvest Omebella have when she walked to the City of Silver?"
He remembered the previous records mentioning that Omebella had descended to the City of Silver multiple times, mainly presenting two images, one representing harvest and reproduction, the other symbolizing desolation and death.

This made Lumian suspect whether Omebella had two identities, with "harvest and reproduction" having its destiny stolen, while "desolation and death" walked to the City of Silver seeking sacrifice.
Mr. Sun shook his head. "There was no record at the time."
Lumian supported his cheek with his hand, pondering silently.
Judging from the demand for the City of Silver to sacrifice half of its people, it does seem closer to the 'desolation and death' image...
But if the 'harvest and reproduction' image was severely damaged, it's also possible to demand life to help oneself recover...
Moreover, two images can be understood, but how can two identities be concentrated in one person... Surely the Goddess of Harvest Omebella didn't steal the identity and destiny of another Omebella before? She's not from the Marauder pathway, and there's no legend indicating She possessed similar items...
Lumian deliberated for a moment, then stood up and said, "I want to touch the Gift of the Land."
To see what resonance Omebella's bloodline could bring, what information could be obtained.
Mr. Sun, Derrick Berg, also stood up. "Okay."
Wearing a simple white robe, he walked steadily in front, entering the round tower from the second-floor connection, then descended all the way, passing through the deep dark dungeon, arriving at a pair of heavy stone doors.
Behind the stone doors was a mottled staircase extending downwards, with points of light like dawn seeping from the depths, bringing some visibility.
Lumian found that the walls on both sides of the staircase were damp, seemingly oozing many water droplets, and tufts of hair-like black plants had grown out of the cracks, hanging there.
The further down the staircase they went, the brighter the dawn-like light became, and between the damp walls and the hair-like black plants grew mushrooms of various colors, golden wheat ears, the unique Black-Faced Grass, and other things. The spirituality in the air also became increasingly lively and vigorous.
Lumian's heart gradually palpitated, as if returning to a mother's embrace, or finding his past self.
He heard the sound of blood flowing, seemingly from within his body, yet also originating from the bottom of the staircase.
"It really is Omebella... The Invisible Child of God is indeed Omebella..." Lumian sighed a couple of times, calming his own state.
His hair was growing inch by inch inside his cloak, his skin becoming more delicate and elastic.

After descending for a while longer, Lumian saw sunlight, coming from Mr. Sun.
Pure, warm, sacred golden light quickly filled this area, causing the forces of desolation and the aura of death to retreat to the edges.
Seeing this scene, Lumian instinctively associated it with a Demoness's Disease and Plague.
In such a domain of sunlight, the vast majority of mystical pathogens would quickly perish, while a few ordinary pathogens might survive...
Finally, The Sun Derrick Berg and Lumian arrived at a large room filled with points of dawn-like light.
The room was permeated with the smell of soil, the scent of grass, and the fragrance of flowers. The ceiling, floor, and surrounding walls were covered with those hair-like black things, growing all kinds of plants and mushrooms.
In the center of this room, brown soil was piled up, with a withered, giant tree trunk inserted at the top.
The tree trunk was just short of touching the ceiling, about seven or eight meters high, requiring three or four people's arm span to encircle it. Most of the bark on its surface had fallen off, with the remaining parts a grayish-brown color.
Its core had become hollow, and the exposed wood parts facing Lumian and Mr. Sun were partly protruding and partly sunken, outlining a legless, human-like pattern.
That silhouette used the branches on the trunk as hands, its face extremely distorted, with two huge crimson flowers serving as eyes.
Within the wood grain texture of its "body surface", traces of blood color were faintly visible.
"This is the Gift of the Land." The patches of sacred sunlight created by Mr. Sun merged with the points of dawn-like light in the room.
Lumian already felt his blood stirring, feeling an unusually close, blood-based connection with that withered tree trunk.
The two were originally one.
Lumian seemed to receive a call, subconsciously walking forward, his elegant and clean face seeming to emit its own radiance in the dawn-like light mixed with sunlight.
One step, two steps, three steps... He came to the top of the pile of brown soil, stopping in front of the withered giant tree.
The Sun Derrick Berg did not stop her.
Lumian took a breath, adjusted his state, prepared to use Mirror Substitution, and then extended his right palm with evenly proportioned bones and flesh and long fingers, touching towards

the withered tree trunk with streaks of blood seeping out.
As soon as his fingers touched the dull-colored wood, a scene suddenly flashed in his mind:
The sky was hazy, seemingly shrouded in dark mist, a huge light shadow that seemed able to support heaven and earth appeared in front, while behind were strange silhouettes outlined by blurred lines...
This scene flashed by, followed immediately by darkness without a hint of light, an utterly quiet stillness.
After an unknown time, in the darkness and stillness, a shrill cry faintly came:
"My child, Omebella...
"My child, Omebella..."
Lumian suddenly broke free from the illusion, as if forcibly pushed away from the Gift of the Land by an invisible force.
He immediately felt a stinging pain in his right shoulder, with a bit of coolness like moonlight shining.
That was the contract mark from the Abscessed Hand being activated, but without producing any effect, bringing teleportation and Blink.

Chapter 892: That Name

Lumian turned his gaze to his right shoulder.

Before this, he had anticipated many scenarios, but he hadn't expected that the contract mark corresponding to the Abscessed Hand would have an abnormal reaction when he touched the Gift of the Land, bringing a stinging pain and coolness.

Is this because the complete Abscessed Hand has corruption from the Great Mother, or does Hand Bro himself have some connection to the Goddess of Harvest Omebella? When He became 0-01's puppet and encountered me, He called out Omebella... Lumian frowned imperceptibly, forming a rough guess.

It was very strange that despite the Abscessed Hand being an Angel, no high-level being remembered His original form!

Combining this with some thoughts from reading the records about Omebella earlier, Lumian suspected whether Hand Bro might also be an Angel whose identity and destiny were stolen by enemies, and who was even brutally dismembered and sealed in various places to prevent His resurrection.

However, this suspicion couldn't explain one issue—judging from how the Abscessed Hand evolved towards femininity when all parts of its body were assembled, showing characteristics related to Sequence 1 Beauty Goddess of the Moon pathway, He must have either been deeply contaminated by the Great Mother or received corresponding boons. Who would dare to bear such a destiny?

Perhaps Hand Bro both satisfies the conditions of lacking necessary wisdom and receiving high-level boons from the Great Mother, naturally reacting to matters of the Child of God, and also has intricate connections with Omebella... He should be an Angel of the Moon pathway, which is adjacent to the Goddess of Harvest Omebella's pathway...

I wonder how many high-level beings from the Second Epoch have survived... But they may not know about these matters, just like the Round Moon Duke of the Sanguine... Lumian suppressed the doubts in his heart and looked again at the Gift of the Land existing in the form of a withered tree trunk.

After the first contact, he had confirmed that he wouldn't die on the spot because of this, so he tried to press his right palm again on the grayish-brown tree trunk with both protrusions and depressions.

The fragrance of flowers and the fishy smell of blood pierced his nostrils. Before his eyes again appeared the hazy sky shrouded in dark mist, the huge light shadow that could support heaven and earth, and the strange silhouettes outlined by blurred lines.

This time, Lumian felt pain, felt terror, and also felt the madness of wanting all things to return to the earth.
He fell into familiar darkness, without a hint of light, quiet to the point of deathly stillness.
As time passed second by second, a shrill cry gradually sounded in his ears, calling for her child Omebella.
This made Lumian slowly come to his senses, and then he felt the stinging pain and coolness in his right shoulder.
He endured this feeling, not being pushed out of the illusion.
The darkness quickly shattered, and Lumian saw the light of dawn, saw faces full of determination, and felt anger, pain, and hatred in his heart.
At this moment, he heard a voice, gentle yet painful, a woman's voice: "Zedus..."
Lumian "woke up", and what entered his eyes was the distorted face outlined by protrusions and depressions on the withered tree trunk, and the two huge crimson flowers serving as the face's eyes.
His palm was still pressed against the tree trunk.
What I just saw and heard, were they Omebella's last obsessions, the scenes that left the deepest impression on Her? Combining the corresponding emotions, does the world shrouded in dark mist correspond to Her first death? Are the huge light shadow and one of the blurred figures the high-level being who stole Her identity and destiny?
What do that deathly silent darkness and the shrill cry represent? I've heard similar cries in the depths of the Underworld, when I shared the senses of the creature inside the bird egg... The bird egg represents gestation... Does that deathly silent darkness correspond to Omebella's state before birth, or the state before regaining new life? Did that voice crying out for her child pull Omebella back from the depths of death, giving Her new life?
Would this new life also reset identity and destiny, making the theft ineffective?
The protagonists of the third scene are the dawn and human faces, with emotions of anger and hatred. Does this correspond to Omebella being killed by the City of Silver?
Yes, these can all be called obsessions, having a crucial impact on Omebella's fate...
Who was that 'Zedus' at the end?
As these thoughts flashed through his mind, Lumian turned his head to look at the tall and steady Mr. Sun beside him. "May I know if you have heard of the name Zedus?"
"You can just speak casually. In the church, no one is nobler than another." The Sun Derrick Berg first corrected, then shook his head

and said, "I haven't heard this name."
"Was there no one called Zedus among the brass of the City of Silver when the Goddess of Harvest Omebella last came to the City of Silver?" Lumian pursued.
Mr. Sun answered in a very certain tone, "No."
Zedus wasn't the person who killed Omebella... Who could it be? Thinking of this, Lumian suddenly had a flash of insight.
Could this be Hand Bro's name?
Since Hand Bro could call out Omebella to me, causing the contract to mutate when I touched the Gift of the Land, theoretically, Omebella's remnant consciousness in the Gift of the Land should also be able to detect the Abscessed Hand's contract mark on me and call out His name!
Lumian withdrew his right hand, waited for several tens of seconds, and pressed his palm to the withered tree trunk for the third time.
The previous illusions and auditory hallucinations reappeared, but there was no additional content.
Lumian sighed inwardly, crouched down slightly, adjusted his cloak, and pressed his other hand to the surface of the Gift of the Land, grasping the most solid and obvious protrusion.
Then, he gritted his teeth, the blood vessels on his neck bulged, and his temples throbbed with a blue tint.
This made Mr. Sun's eyelids twitch, as if he hadn't expected a beautiful lady with a cold expression to show such a side.
Soon, the brown soil began to loosen, and Lumian forcefully pulled up that withered, giant tree trunk.
The entire New City of Silver inexplicably trembled—a gentle shake.
Lumian half-lifted the seven or eight-meter-high withered tree trunk, trying to swing it.
It can barely be used to smash people, but it would reduce agility to the lowest level, and speed would also significantly decrease... Lumian made a judgment on whether he could use the Gift of the Land to fight in the future, then inserted the huge withered tree trunk back into the pile of brown soil.
Almost simultaneously, he felt a certain power in his bloodline surge towards his abdomen, causing a slight stinging pain there, as if something was gestating.
Lumian raised his right hand, pressing it towards the corresponding position on his stomach with quiet and eerie black flames.
For a moment, he experienced maternal emotions of reluctance and pity, but this couldn't stop him from infusing the Demoness's

black flames into his abdomen in the manner of Fire Infusion.
Indescribable pain, loss, and sadness surged into his heart simultaneously, his face suddenly turned pale, and his light-colored lips involuntarily trembled slightly.
This made The Sun Derrick Berg can't help but ask, "Do you need my help to dispel the negative effects, or find a Beyonder to provide treatment?"
Lumian shook his head, curled his lips, and said in a low voice, "A small matter."
He turned to remind Mr. Sun, "Even Beyonders with godhood might conceive after touching the Gift of the Land, and those with Omebella's bloodline are more likely to encounter this."
"We don't have any records of this. Historically, the City of Silver has needed to actively use this Sealed Artifact very rarely, and each time, the user quickly died." Mr. Sun nodded slightly.
Lumian didn't say anything more, turned around, and walked step by step towards the outside of this huge room, towards the mottled stairs leading to the upper part of the round tower, with Mr. Sun quietly trailing behind.
...
In the hotel room.
Lumian wrote down the gains and questions from reading the records related to Omebella and touching the Gift of the Land in a letter.
He then summoned the "doll" messenger and handed over this letter and a mirror—with this marked mirror, he could later directly transmit information to Madam Magician through the mirror world.
The "doll" messenger took the letter and mirror but didn't leave immediately. Wearing a light golden dress, it leaned against the window frame, carefully and attentively examining Lumian.
Lumian arched an eyebrow. "What are you looking at?"
The "doll" messenger suddenly jumped up, floating in mid-air, and said with an indignant look, "Don't you know how beautiful you look right now?
"Beautiful enough for me to ignore that you're still wearing men's clothes, beautiful enough for me to forgive why you haven't made yourself tidier!"
Lumian was momentarily at a loss for words.
The "doll" messenger waved its hand and said reluctantly, "See you next time!"
"See you next time," Lumian politely replied.
After about fifteen minutes, the "doll" messenger emerged from the void, holding a bulging envelope, and said joyfully, "We meet

again!"
"Indeed." Lumian was a bit helpless.
He took the envelope, opened it, and found that the letter itself was very thin, mainly containing an additional green gemstone.
The gemstone was deep and alluring, with a dreamy crystalline green color.
Lumian only looked at it for a moment, but felt as if his vision and soul were sinking into it.
He quickly forced himself to look away, unfolded the letter paper with confusion, and began to read:
"The theft of Omebella's identity and destiny had not become ineffective before the Fifth Epoch...
"We will inquire about the name 'Zedus' from the ancient beings who survived from the Second Epoch, including seeking revelation from even higher beings.
"The origin of this name might solve the mysteries surrounding Omebella...
"That green gemstone was made at my request by Miss Justice, with the purpose of helping you seal part of the knowledge related to the great existences. Although you still have a lot of corruption and seals, as long as you don't recall that knowledge, there shouldn't be any problems. But we can't guarantee that you won't encounter situations where you need to recall it. Before you possess a true or false Angel rank, this hypnotic effect won't be lifted."
Lumian understood the reason and looked at the green gemstone again, allowing his mind to sink into it.
When he came to his senses, the green gemstone had become ordinary, and he had forgotten part of his knowledge.
But it's still worth quite a bit of money. Lumian put away the green gemstone and said to the "doll" messenger still lingering over the desk, "See you next time."
The "doll" messenger waved in response."See you next time!"
Leaving the room, Lumian said to Franca, Jenna, Ludwig, and others, "We're going back to Trier now."

Chapter 893: A Terrifying Matter

Inside the newly rented apartment of Lumian and others on Rue de la Gauche in Quartier de l'Observatoire.

"We're going to the catacombs now," Lumian said to Jenna and Franca in the living room, after glancing out the window at the passing carriages, bicycles, and various mechanical creations.

Before Franca contacted the Demoness of Black again, he wanted to get more intelligence from Krismona's shadow to guard against possible accidents. This required Jenna to advance to Demoness of Affliction at the sacrificial square on the third level of the catacombs.

Jenna looked at the black cloak Lumian was wearing and asked carefully, "Do you need to change your clothes underneath? At least that would make you more comfortable."

Lumian fell silent for a few seconds before stating, "Okay."

Now it was Jenna's turn to be surprised. She had thought Lumian would be more resistant and would need to be persuaded with sufficient reasons.

Franca was equally astonished. When she had drunk the Witch potion, she hadn't accepted such things so quickly.

Her lake-blue eyes flickered slightly, and she quickly made some guesses, her emotions becoming rather complex.

Except for height, Lumian's figure was now similar to Jenna's. After receiving a few pieces of clothing from her, he walked into the bedroom, not completely letting go despite the more intimate relationship between the three of them.

Seeing this, Jenna vaguely understood and turned her head to look at Franca.

"Sigh..." Franca sighed.

Jenna followed by pursing her lips.

Soon after, Lumian came out, wearing the linen men's shirt and dark trousers with a spirited and dashing air.

Franca looked him over and said, "You're too tall. You'll need to find a tailor to make custom-fitted women's clothes."

Lumian tersely acknowledged and walked to the full-length mirror in the living room, looking at himself with his black hair simply tied back.

The stunningly beautiful yet cold-expressionless woman in the reflection made him feel a moment of disorientation. He unconsciously reached into the Traveler's Bag and took out the Lie earring.

His right hand hovered in midair, not immediately putting on the earring.

Franca quickly stepped forward, trying to make her tone sound natural. "I don't think you should force it now. The premise for Aurore's true resurrection is that you always maintain your sense of self and reach the top of the two Calamity pathways. During this process, the fragments of her soul should gradually revive according to your progress. You don't need to deliberately act or imitate her."
"Moreover, Madam Magician guesses that the key part of Aurore's resurrection lies with the Demoness of Unaging. It may not be a good thing for you to let her manifest in you now, just like switching to an adjacent pathway before the Sequence 4 node," Jenna also said in a soft voice.
"Yes, I don't know if your sister ever taught you this phrase: 'Too much of a good thing'. It means that even good things can become bad if taken to excess," Franca added.
Lumian was silent for a moment, then put the Lie earring back into the Traveler's Bag.
Franca quietly let out a sigh of relief and said with a smile, "Do you need a hat with a veil or will you continue to wear the cloak? Looking like this, you'll quickly become the center of attention for everyone on the street."
As fellow Demonesses, she and Jenna both had deep experience with similar situations, and Lumian was now a Demoness with godhood.
Lumian picked up the cloak draped over the back of a nearby chair and put it on again.
As the hood gradually covered his delicate and fine features and simply tied black hair, Lumian turned around and walked towards the door.
Jenna put on a round ladies' hat with a black veil hanging down, while Franca prepared a baseball cap for herself, lowering the brim.
...
On the third level of the catacombs, inside the sacrificial square.
Lumian threw out several mirrors, setting up a Mirror Maze. This way, even if other people came to this level to explore and adventure, they wouldn't be able to see the three Demonesses and their companions, and would pass through normally.
As Jenna adjusted her state and prepared the potion, Franca looked towards the boundary of the maze, which showed no sign of abnormality, and exclaimed in admiration,
"As expected of a demigod. Even though I know the real surrounding area has been hidden by a Mirror Maze, I can't see any problems at all."

In comparison, her own Mirror Maze couldn't achieve this level.
Before Lumian could respond, she asked curiously, "When do you plan to give Voisin Sanson's corpse to Ludwig?"
After Voisin Sanson's death, because he had already been deeply corrupted by the power of Inevitability, and continuing to stay in the special mirror world was quite dangerous, Lumian and the others didn't channel his spirit, but only took away his corpse.
Lumian thought for a moment, then smiled slightly and said, "There's no rush. By stringing him along bit by bit, perhaps the ritual to advance to Sequence 3 of the Hunter pathway will also require team cooperation. Having an Angel team member like this could greatly reduce the number requirement.
"Besides, whether it's you digesting the remaining Affliction potion or Jenna digesting the Affliction potion, we can make use of Ludwig. If we give him all the benefits at once now, how can we make him reluctant to leave?"
Seeing Lumian seriously considering returning to Sequence 3 of the Hunter pathway, Franca felt a wave of joy and was quite gratified, her arms involuntarily swaying twice.
"Anthony is also about to become Sequence 5, just waiting for the final ritual preparation," Lumian suddenly said.
"Uh..." Franca was stunned for a moment. "When did this happen?"
"He told me yesterday. While you were advancing matters related to the Demoness Sect, he was also completing Madam Justice's tasks. He's already established initial contact with the Psychology Alchemists and naturally received corresponding rewards. He's been applying his Hypnosis ability all along, including helping me, and completed the digestion some time ago," Lumian briefly explained. "What he currently needs is to go to the spirit world to contract a certain creature, gaining the characteristic of maintaining clarity in dreams. This can also be substituted by other methods, and Ludwig's dishes might be able to help."
Franca smacked her lips. "We haven't been caring enough about Anthony..."
"For a Spectator, he might not want you to care too much about him or pay attention to him," Lumian glanced at a corner of the Mirror Maze. "Just like he's here now too, ready to Placate Jenna immediately if the situation goes wrong."
He's here too? Franca felt as if she had heard a ghost story.
At this time, Jenna, who had already eaten the Ice Lemon Fish fillet, had prepared the Affliction potion, which was black-based with green foam on top.
Lumian immediately raised both arms.
Behind Jenna, a crystal-clear ice pillar with multiple protrusions

rose from the ground, ready to serve as a stake.
Then, Jenna handed the Affliction potion to Lumian and climbed to the top of the ice pillar on her own, allowing Franca to tightly bind her body, restricting her movement.
Bright white Fire Ravens lit up around Lumian. They circled and flew out, landing on Jenna's body surface.
Jenna was quickly set on fire, her expression uncontrollably twisting.
Lumian stepped on layers of frost-condensed stairs, coming to Jenna's front, and poured that bottle of potion into his companion's mouth.
Jenna's mind began to blur, the pain in her body pulling at her, keeping her last bit of clarity.
Lumian then floated lightly from the top of the frost stairs to the ground, focusing on sensing the surroundings.
He was waiting for Krismona's shadow to arrive. Having lost Mr. Fool's seal, he currently couldn't enter the area around the Samaritan Women's Spring.
Franca kept watching Jenna, seeing her skin quickly blacken, her face twist to deformation, contorted in pain, her teeth no longer able to bite, emitting painful sounds.
This made Franca extremely distressed, seemingly more tormented than when she herself had performed this ritual.
Suddenly, Lumian's light blue eyes first took on an iron-black color, then became silver-white with black.
He felt that Krismona's shadow, or rather her residual consciousness, had descended within the Mirror Maze, yet he couldn't see her at all.
Jenna's thoughts continued to drift, her sense of self gradually losing itself. She recalled the pain and joy of her time with Lumian, and also remembered the experience of helping Franca find pleasure and her inner emotions during that period—addicted because of enjoyment, awakened because of pain.
In this state, Jenna had no way of knowing whether she had been noticed by the Primordial Demoness. By the time she regained some of her thoughts, a sacred figure wearing a plain white robe, blurry and hard to see clearly, had appeared before her eyes.
"Lady Krismona," Jenna called out the other's name, and learning from last time's lesson, she quickly and directly asked, "Why does the Primordial One hate pure females who walk the Demoness pathway?"
Krismona answered in an ethereal voice, "My mother hates those Demonesses who don't experience the pain of gender change, and She's also guarding against them."

"Why guard against them?" Jenna further inquired.
Krismona spoke in an extremely hollow tone, "Pure female Demonesses, after becoming Angels, or perhaps after becoming Demonesses of Unaging, might encounter a very terrifying matter. They might overcome it, or they might not. If they can't, it's a very big problem for my mother. She can't let it happen."
Jenna was stunned for a moment, then blurted out, "What about you?"
Strands of blood color suddenly appeared on the surface of Krismona's blurry face. Her previously hollow voice suddenly carried a hint of suppression and pain. "So, I died..."
Before the words faded, this former Demoness of Catastrophe, a true Child of God, rapidly faded away.
"What exactly is that terrifying matter?" Jenna rushed to ask.
Krismona's shadow quickly dissipated, leaving only half a sentence: "That mirror world..."
Jenna suddenly came to her senses, seeing the charred skin on her body surface falling off in pieces, while the ropes had been burned through at some unknown time.
She immediately concealed her form and sought a corner to change her clothes.
Phew... Seeing this, Franca instinctively let out the worry and torment pent up in her heart.
At the same time, she seemed to hear Lumian also quietly let out a sigh of relief.

Chapter 894: Value

After Jenna changed into her dress, she recounted in full her current state and the information she had just obtained from Krismona.

She said with regret, "The time was still not enough. I could only see Lady Krismona for that very short period between fully enduring the potion and regaining complete consciousness.

"However, next time I'll be able to clearly ask what that terrifying matter is."

Lumian looked around and said, "Just now I could only sense Krismona's residual consciousness appear, but I couldn't directly see or make contact with her. This may be because she is one with the seal of the catacombs itself, or because she possesses some special quality that allows her to exert more precise influence on Demonesses."

"I think it's all of the above," Franca said to Jenna with considerable concern. "I always thought the greatest danger for female Demonesses was the Primordial One's hatred, that we would be interfered with during advancement, and even if we could struggle through, we would be hunted down by the Demoness Sect afterwards. I didn't expect there was also this hidden problem. The terrifying matter Krismona spoke of even makes the Primordial Demoness wary. It's very likely related to the deepest secrets of the special mirror world. Do you want to consider switching to the Hunter pathway, then jumping back to the Demoness pathway later?"

Jenna fell silent for a moment before saying, "I want to wait until I understand what that terrifying matter is before deciding whether or not to abandon my identity as a pure female Demoness."

After Lumian's experience, she actually wasn't as averse to changing gender for just a period of time rather than permanently.

Jenna paused, then said with a self-deprecating smile that was half sighing and half intended to comfort Lumian, "I've lived in Quartier du Jardin Botanique and the market district for so many years, and I've seen many tragic things. One thing I've learned is that if you don't even have value to be used by others, it's very difficult to break free from the mire.

"As a pure female Demoness, possibly linked to the deepest secrets of the special mirror world, this is the key reason I was able to receive a warning from Lady Krismona. And later, unable to join the Demoness Sect, if I want to digest potions faster, advance better, resist the tendency towards madness and loss of control,

and truly possess the ability to protect family and friends, this should also be a very important factor. There will always be high-level figures who want to use female Demonesses to do certain things, to touch the deepest secrets of the special mirror world, so they'll need to give me certain 'benefits'.
"Relying on the Major Arcana card holders is one way, but it can't be the only way."
Lumian fell silent for a few seconds before stating, "Before encountering that terrifying matter, you should still have opportunities to question Krismona's shadow.
"We'll decide whether or not to take the risk after we understand the nature of the problem."
"Right," Franca agreed with Lumian. "When advancing to Demoness of Despair, you should be able to contact Krismona once more. Anyway, that terrifying matter won't appear until at least the Demoness of Unaging stage."
Lumian, wearing a black cloak and holding a white candle, shook his head.
"This is the last option. We can't assume Krismona is necessarily good and telling the whole truth. Perhaps pure female Demonesses encounter that matter at the Demoness of Despair stage, and Krismona is waiting for this accident.
"The opportunity I'm talking about is that in a few days, we should be able to enter Mr. Fool's dream, with a good chance of being imbued with Mr. Fool's aura. That way, we can pass through the seal and directly face Krismona's shadow near the Samaritan Women's Spring.
"Moreover, the most acceptable method for the Demoness of Despair ritual currently is to go to Morora, which definitely won't allow time to return to Trier and advance here."
Lumian continued with very clear reasoning, "There's another method using those Mirror People in the special mirror world as ritual objects, but this is only suitable for Franca. If Jenna, as a female Demoness, were to use this method to complete the ritual, it might cause that terrifying matter to arrive prematurely."
After all, it was very closely related to the deepest secrets of the special mirror world.
"Mm." Both Jenna and Franca agreed with Lumian's explanation.
Lumian called out to Anthony standing in the corner, dispelled the Mirror Maze, retrieved the mirrors, and holding a burning white candle, headed towards the upper levels of the catacombs.
Franca walked alongside him and said after some thought, "By the way, the Despair potion you drank should include portions from Sequence 9 to Sequence 5, right? When I was considering switching

to the Hunter pathway before, I consulted Madam Judgment about related matters. She said one issue with switching to adjacent pathways is that all the preceding potions have to be fully digested, otherwise it will affect one's state and significantly increase risks for future advancements."
This is unlike advancing within the same pathway, where the mental and spiritual state has already been adjusted to suit digestion of preceding potions, so it doesn't take long to stabilize one's condition.
Lumian chuckled softly, seeming to bring a touch of color to the dark and gloomy catacombs.
"I've already digested most of the Despair potion.
"Given my mental and spiritual state then and afterwards, Affliction isn't a concern. It's very compatible and took just a few days to digest.
"The same goes for Pleasure. My experiences during that period changed my mental and spiritual state, and we even had that experience that very morning. So it's not like my state gradually reverted back due to being away from that condition for too long. This doesn't need to be specially digested again.
"Instigator is similar. Don't you often say I'm an excellent Instigator?
"Comparatively, I've been more engaged in direct combat and killing enemies recently. Using Fate Exchange to harm targets was just one of my methods before, not the main approach. So I'll need to seriously act and digest the Assassin and Witch potions once. But as they're in the minority now, they can't really affect my state much and are more of a hidden danger for future advancements."
"I see..." Franca nodded, not saying anything more.
Afterwards, since Jenna needed to go back to rest, stabilize her condition, and contain the spillover effects of the potion, only Lumian and Franca took a four-wheeled, four-seater carriage to Rue Orosai in Quartier de la Cathédrale Commémorative.
Before going to Trocadéro to find the Demoness of Black, they planned to return to their originally rented apartment to see if the Demoness of Black had sought out Franca and left any messages.
As for choosing a rental carriage instead of public transport or the metro, it was because the two Demonesses, even wearing hats and loose clothing, would inevitably encounter some harassment incidents.
Although Franca and Lumian weren't afraid, they felt there was no need to make themselves uncomfortable. They weren't the type of Demonesses who played extremely extreme roles.
Quartier de l'Observatoire and Quartier de la Cathédrale

Commémorative were adjacent, so it didn't take long for the two Demonesses to return to Apartment 702 at 9 Rue Orosai and open the door.
Although they had only been gone for a few days, and Franca hadn't even had time to tell the landlord about ending the lease early and not needing the deposit back, when they saw the interior layout and the armchair, they felt as if an era had passed.
Various memories flashed through Franca's mind. At times she felt sweet, at times she couldn't help but silently sigh.
After Lumian concealed himself and hid, Franca entered the room alone, closed the wooden door, and carefully examined every detail of the place, focusing on all items with glass mirror surfaces.
"No messages, no traces, but I feel like someone's been here..." Franca muttered to herself as she withdrew her palm from the full-length mirror in the living room.
She turned around and walked towards the master bedroom.
At that moment, the full-length mirror suddenly became dim, as if it had been placed in a lightless environment.
In this dimness, a figure was quickly outlined.
She wore a black court dress, her black hair neatly coiled up, lightly covered by a hat with a dark veil hanging down. Her indescribably beautiful face was slightly pale, her deep gray eyes misty like smoky rain, emitting a noticeable brightness, naturally exuding a pitiable quality.
This was the Demoness of Black, Clarice!
At this moment, the Demoness of Black's face was expressionless, her deep gray eyes reflecting the tall, soft silhouette of Franca's back.
The corner of her mouth curved up slightly, and a few naturally falling strands of her hair drilled out from the mirror into the outside world, extending silently towards Franca's back as if they had a life of their own.
Franca suddenly received a warning, a warning from her companion.
Without thinking, she actively triggered Mirror Substitution.
The next second, her body was touched by those few strands of black hair. First, it turned into a mirror, then became grayish-white, and fell to the ground with a thud.
The mirror had become stone.
Almost simultaneously, the Demoness of Black Clarice in the full-length mirror saw a figure leap down from above.
That figure wore a black cloak, with light blue eyes, pale lips, a clean and elegant face, stunningly beautiful features, a cold and calm expression, standing over 1.8 meters tall, body slightly bent,

both hands holding a huge iron-black straight sword.
That huge straight sword burned with intense white-blue flames, slamming onto the ground with a bang.
This didn't shatter or pierce the floor, but hit an invisible barrier. As the entire space gently shook, it triggered a fierce fire snake of intense white-blue, rapidly pouncing towards that full-length mirror, igniting the tea table and wooden boards along the way, quickly reducing them to ashes.
Bottle of Fiction!
When the Demoness of Black's hair strands stabbed out from the mirror, Lumian was already prepared to act to save Franca!
He hadn't expected the Demoness of Black to be so direct and decisive in trying to petrify Franca without saying a word, but this didn't hinder him from following his combat instincts and quickly responding.
The Demoness of Black in the full-length mirror still had that pitiable appearance, but her eyes reflecting Lumian's figure suddenly became covered with a layer of grayish-white, cold color.

Chapter 895: A Brief Battle

The Demoness of Black slightly raised her chin and let out a piercing shriek.

Invisible sound waves instantly caused the mirror to take on a grayish-white, dim color. Along with this, Clarice's hair broke free from its constraints, knocking off her hat and floating upwards. Each strand became thick, as if carved from stone.

This grayish-white spread out from the full-length mirror, causing the intense white-blue fire snake that had rushed to the mirror's front to freeze in place, turning into a statue. It failed to explode the mirror as Lumian had expected, destroying the Demoness of Black's medium for interfering with the interior of the Bottle of Fiction.

The grayish-white created by Clarice continued to spread, like surging tides, quickly engulfing the nearby armchair, sofa set, and cabinets, causing them to lose their luster, take on a grayish-white color, and appear much harder.

This grayish-white "tide" rapidly covered the entire room, enveloping both Lumian and Franca.

Under the constraints of the Bottle of Fiction, facing such a wide-range attack, Mirror Substitution seemed to have lost its effect, because after using a substitute, one would still appear in a petrifying area.

The next second, Lumian and Franca, covered in thick dust-like particles, regressed into grayish-white stone mirrors, but their figures did not appear anywhere within the Bottle of Fiction.

The Bottle of Fiction itself seemed to have undergone petrification, turning into a grayish-white, completely sealed cage.

Seeing this scene, the Demoness of Black in the full-length mirror murmured to herself, "Did they escape?"

The current situation indicated that Lumian, relying on the abilities of a Demoness of Despair, and Franca, using the power of the Ice Amulet, had managed to hide in a mirror just before being petrified, then traversed and escaped.

The current problem was that, given the Demoness of Black's control over the mirror world, she could easily intercept the two in some illusory, dark tunnel, but she hadn't sensed any movement.

At this moment, the Demoness of Black Clarice received a warning from her spirituality and suddenly turned around, casting her gaze towards the dense, illusory spider web behind her.

In one of those dim, unreal tunnels, Lumian, wearing a black cloak and very tall, held up an exaggeratedly shaped iron-black straight sword with one hand, descending from above to slash at the

Demoness of Black.
Escape?
Someone holding the Sword of Courage wouldn't consider this option!
If they were to escape, it would be using the retreat as a feint for advancing by setting a trap!
The intense white-blue flames on the Sword of Courage instantly surged into intense black, like boiling pitch, carrying the violence and madness to destroy all things, spirit and flesh.
Simultaneously, Lumian's naturally hanging left palm imperceptibly pressed towards the Demoness of Black from a distance.
On his wrist, which was like a work of art, he wore a silver-white and black bracelet that looked cheap. His crystal-clear, light blue eyes took on a silver-black hue.
Boom!
The black flames, suppressing intensity and madness, exploded in mid-air. Fierce shock waves carrying countless black fires surged towards the Demoness of Black Clarice.
This ageless Demoness didn't use Petrification to respond. Her body rapidly thinned and shrank, flashing a faint light.
She became a mirror.
Crack! That mirror shattered in the explosion, its spirituality completely exhausted in the black flames.
The Fire of Destruction mixed in the terrifying explosion further engulfed the entire area behind the mirror, extinguishing all signs of life.
But when the Fire of Destruction extinguished and the explosion's aftermath ended, the figure of the Demoness of Black outlined in one corner of the void black area behind the mirror.
She seemed able to control the timing of her return to reality after using Mirror Substitution, avoiding appearing in the fire while the Fire of Destruction was still burning.
Suddenly, behind the Demoness of Black, a mirror hidden in the darkness appeared. It directly reflected Clarice's figure, and in the mirror was also Lumian, his clean face tinged with a dark hue from the remaining firelight.
Mirror Projection!
As soon as this Lumian appeared, he immediately transformed into quiet, evil black flames, enveloping the Demoness of Black's figure in the mirror.
Only at this moment did the Demoness of Black seem to sense the danger, actively using Mirror Substitution.
But she was still a beat too slow. Her appearance in this corner, in

front of this mirror with Lumian's Mirror Projection, wasn't coincidental, but a carefully designed outcome!
Lumian's earlier apparent frontal attack with the Sword of Courage was actually focused on his left palm that wasn't holding the sword.
He wore the Circle of Binding to elevate his ability to Compelling Fate to Sequence 4 level!
And he had just consumed nearly a third of his spirituality to make the fate of where the Demoness of Black would appear after using Mirror Substitution predetermined, making the corresponding tributary become part of the main stream.
Thus, the Demoness of Black "actively" walked into the trap, standing in front of the mirror with Lumian's Mirror Projection.
At the same time, to prevent the Demoness of Black from detecting the danger in time, Lumian had, on one hand, applied anti-divination treatment to that mirror before launching the attack, and on the other hand, deliberately let the Fire of Destruction cover the entire area behind the mirror, making every corner look like there was no ambush—even if there was, it would obviously be destroyed by the Fire of Destruction. But in reality, relying on his Precision ability, he had covertly made some Fire of Destruction bypass the pre-placed mirror.
Under these various schemes, the Demoness of Black failed to use Mirror Substitution before Lumian's Mirror Projection launched the Demoness's curse.
The Demoness of Black's deep gray eyes, seemingly hiding rain and mist, suddenly widened, and quiet, evil black flames burst forth from within her body.
These black flames burned fiercely, quickly igniting the soul of the Demoness of Black Clarice, accompanied by a silent explosion.
Curse plus Cull!
Crack, crack, the figure of the Demoness of Black kept flashing, turning into mirror after mirror.
Those mirrors successively lost their luster, becoming dim, but unable to extinguish the black flames burning the Demoness of Black from the inside out.
After a few seconds, the Demoness of Black Clarice, too weak to use Mirror Substitution, saw Lumian's figure walk up to her.
This beautiful girl wearing a black cloak, making her face appear even fairer, raised the huge straight sword burning with intense white-blue flames.
That iron-black giant sword came down with a thunderous sound, chopping at the Demoness of Black's neck.
Boom!

This pitiable lady was torn to pieces, scattering around in the form of corpse pieces carrying black flames.
Franca's figure returned from another void dark tunnel, looking at the large number of corpse pieces on the ground, and said with a stunned expression, "Is it resolved just like that?"
This was the Demoness of Black, a Demoness titled by color!
Previously, Franca had only hoped that Lumian could briefly suppress the Demoness of Black, not giving Clarice a chance to interfere with her action of escaping through the mirror world. If she successfully escaped, it would be much easier for Lumian, as a Sequence 4 demigod, to disengage from the battle afterwards.
Of course, Franca would inevitably hope to find an opportunity to use the Certain Death effect of the Inevitable Gun to accomplish the feat of slaying a demigod. If that failed, she could still use Sure Hit plus Impregnating Bullet to give Lumian a chance to destroy the enemy.
Lumian didn't put away the Sword of Courage, staring at the still-burning corpse pieces, and said carefully, "She showed Sequence 3 level in some abilities, but overall seemed stiff and inexperienced. Not only did she not seem like an experienced Demoness of Unaging, but she also seemed a bit weaker than a normal Demoness of Despair. She didn't even notice when I was placing mirrors while invisible..."
Before Lumian finished speaking, as the Demoness's black flames finished burning, those corpse pieces began to fade, gradually dissolving, as if returning to formlessness.
"Not the normal Demoness of Black." Franca quickly made a judgment.
"This also means we have no spoils," Lumian laughed, saying to Franca who had already used up the last Mirror Traversal ability of the Ice Amulet, "Let's return to the real world first, and I'll come back later to check what's left in the end."
Franca understood that Lumian was worried that the abnormal state of the Demoness of Black might lead to a corpse transformation or bring other accidents. If only he came to check, it would be much safer.
Without being reckless, Franca pressed her hand behind the mirror, leaving this area and returning with Lumian to the living room of apartment 702.
Everything here had turned to stone, and with the removal of the Bottle of Fiction, grayish-white powder fell like rain.
Franca covered her mouth and nose, muttering, "This is severe pollution."
She reached into the Traveler's Bag, intending to take out the

remaining verl d'or and leave it here as compensation for the damaged furniture.
At this moment, Lumian suddenly had a premonition. His figure disappeared in an instant, melting into the shadows, hiding in the bedroom where Jenna had originally lived.
The next second, Franca also sensed something with her spirituality, casting her gaze towards the glass window that had been protected by the Bottle of Fiction and had not yet petrified.
The left part of the double-opening glass window suddenly darkened, quickly outlining a figure as if reflecting an image on water.
That figure wore a black, elegant court dress, with black hair coiled up, wearing a hat with a dark veil hanging down. Her face was indescribably beautiful, her deep gray eyes bright but revealing undisguisable sorrow, her red lips slightly curved, her chin beautifully arched. Not only men but also women who saw her would instinctively feel pity.
Demoness of Black!
Demoness of Black Clarice!
At this moment, Franca was a bit stunned.
Did the Demoness of Black get reanimated?
No, even if it was a reanimation, it should have appeared on the full-length mirror in the living room!
If it isn't reanimation, who is this now, and who was that earlier?
As Franca's mind instantly tensed, the Demoness of Black on the glass window gently nodded and asked in a soft voice, "What exactly happened a few days ago that made you only return now?"
This attitude... it's very amiable... Franca, who had initially thought of drawing her gun and attacking, suddenly felt confused.

Chapter 896: Charm

Seeing that the Demoness of Black had no immediate intention to attack her, and didn't seem to be secretly releasing Plague, Franca steadied herself and began reciting her pre-rehearsed words, "That day, Lumian suddenly said that the Rose School of Thought had brought a very important item to Trier, which could potentially cause chaos and affect us, so we needed to quickly move to another safe house..."

This time, Franca pushed all the problems and abnormalities onto Lumian, saying she didn't know why this lover she met through the Iron and Blood Cross Order was hiding so many secrets. Despite not being very powerful, he seemed to have a very high status, to the extent that after a dazzling light suddenly burst in the sky over Trier, it attracted the attack of two bestowed demigods.

Franca truthfully recounted her role in the subsequent battle, only omitting Jenna's abilities and Anthony's revolver. Finally, she said, "At the most critical moment, Lumian came back. He had actually become a Demoness of Despair and quickly killed Higdon, then dealt with Voisin Sanson."

"And then?" the Demoness of Black in the glass window asked.

"She left," Franca answered simply, without further explanation.

She originally felt that although her description was reasonably fabricated, as someone who wasn't a descendant of the Demoness family, with an origin that only seemed clear, having long shared a bed with someone carrying many secrets and special qualities, experiencing many things together, was inherently suspicious. Who could guarantee she hadn't developed some issues because of this?

After the brief battle earlier, she had completely lost confidence in her ability to deceive the Demoness of Black, and was merely giving her a reason to pretend.

"Lumian Lee indeed has quite a few issues. Once exposed, he certainly wouldn't dare stay here anymore," the Demoness of Black said in a very calm tone.

Then, she chuckled softly. "The only pity is that you've lost the most valiant lover below demigod level. The few times I came to look, you were always enjoying yourself immensely, it was enviable."

"..." Franca was stunned for a moment, instinctively cursing in her heart, Dammit! When did she see that? Wasn't there a Bottle of Fiction?

Thinking about the Demoness of Black seeing her in that state, her

face nearly turned green.
She carefully recalled and realized this couldn't really be blamed on Lumian, it was all her own doing—after the first two or three times, she had gotten used to it and found an entertaining point, which was to tease and Charm Lumian until he became urgent, to the point where even the Ascetic couldn't remind him to create the Bottle of Fiction.
What is this called? It's called bringing a calamity upon oneself! I hope the Demoness of Black hadn't seen what I did later to digest the Affliction potion... I hope... Mr. Fool, please protect your devout believer from social death! Franca laughed dryly. "Indeed, he was much more impressive than I had anticipated, but I don't want to mention him anymore. No, her. This bastard not only kept so many secrets from me, but also seduced my other lover Jenna, cuckolding me. I've even digested half of the Affliction potion because of this."
She was laying the groundwork for her rapid digestion of the Affliction potion.
Of course, as said before, giving the Demoness of Black a reason to keep pretending.
"There was such a thing?" The Demoness of Black's face, white to the point of slight transparency, revealed a slight smile, as if she had long guessed that a Sequence 5 Beyonder of the manly pathway like Lumian Lee, frequently in contact with Franca's female lover, would inevitably have a day when he couldn't resist.
"Yes." Franca dug up her true feelings from that time and gritted her teeth.
"You didn't cut off his thing, or force-feed him a potion from the Demoness pathway?" The Demoness of Black relaxed her expression, rarely making a joke. "Well, his sequence is too high, you couldn't make him advance to become a Demoness of Despair.
"Among my lovers, if any male lover is destined to become a Demoness, I don't mind him sleeping with my female lovers, since he'll lose it sooner or later and become a female lover. If I hadn't originally planned for him to walk the Demoness pathway, I would have let him know what pain really is."
You real Demonesses sure play a perverted game... Franca inwardly criticized before saying, "I initially had thoughts of revenge, but later gave up. As an adult, I don't make choices—I take everything!"
At this point, Franca deliberately hesitated. "Moreover, I sensed some issues at the time. He seemed to have a false high status, and torturing him would make my Affliction potion digest rapidly, but before I could probe the real reason, everything exploded."

The Demoness of Black nodded slightly, looking at Franca with an appreciative gaze for two seconds. "No wonder you played that kind of game. It's very interesting, very suitable for a Demoness."
"..." Franca's toes were already constantly scratching the ground inside her boots.
"However, your endurance isn't too good," the Demoness of Black said in an instructive tone.
Franca smiled sheepishly and said, "I only made him endure, not myself..."
"Endurance is also a form of pain. This would allow you to digest the potion from another aspect," the Demoness of Black said seriously, suppressing the smile on her face.
"That's true..." Franca blinked her eyes.
Why didn't I think of that at the time? Otherwise, I would have completely digested the Affliction potion by now!
Ah, I was too focused on having fun!
But Beyonders can't think about "acting" every moment, right? One needs to learn to relax, to learn to use pure entertainment to relieve mental pressure and accumulated tendencies towards losing control!
Franca really didn't want to continue this embarrassing topic, so she took the initiative to say, "But I'll be able to completely digest the Affliction potion in at most two or three weeks."
She had recently been recalling previously learned knowledge, purchasing general-purpose textbooks, and trying to create exam papers for Ludwig.
She believed that just once would be enough to achieve her goal.
This would only take a few days.
The Demoness of Black didn't mention anything about subsequent advancement, which Franca didn't find strange—her current self was highly suspicious, and if the Demoness of Black were to promise to provide the formula and ingredients for the Demoness of Despair, it would mean that the subsequent arrangements would inevitably involve very dangerous traps.
What a situation this is... I know I'm lying, the Demoness of Black knows I'm lying, and I also know that the Demoness of Black knows I'm lying... Franca sighed inwardly, and according to the Demoness of Black's questions, she detailed Lumian's appearance and abilities after he became a Demoness of Despair.
The Demoness of Black listened quietly, then suddenly walked out of the glass window into the grayish-white dominated living room.
Seeing this, alarm bells immediately rang in Franca's heart.
The current situation was clearly the result of Petrification, an

ability unique to high-ranking members of the Demoness pathway, yet the Demoness of Black hadn't asked a single question about what had happened!
The Demoness of Black looked at Franca, her lips gently blossoming into a smile that seemed to cast a glow over the stone room.
Franca found herself uncontrollably drawn in, completely unable to look away.
The Demoness of Black extended her right hand and said in a gentle voice, "You only have one lover left now, but you can become my lover."
Franca suddenly felt that the Demoness of Black was filled with a sacred aura, making her want to protect and also ravish her.
Then, a watery gleam appeared in the Demoness of Black's eyes, taking on a soft and sorrowful quality that made Franca want to merge with her out of pity.
The Demoness of Black walked step by step towards Franca, her right hand still extended, like a queen waiting for her knight to kiss it.
Franca was suddenly overwhelmed by a strong desire to conquer.
In this way, the Demoness of Black continuously changed her aura, as if searching for the one that would most captivate Franca.
Franca's breathing had already become belabored, and she instinctively blurted out, "No need."
This sentence was like a spell, instantly dispelling the current romantic atmosphere. The Demoness of Black returned to her original appearance, stopping just two steps away from Franca.
"Give me a reason," the Demoness of Black asked very calmly, showing no signs of disappointment or anger.
Franca's cheeks had become flushed at some point, her body trembling slightly, as if that refusal had used up all her strength.
Her mind raced, quickly finding a very good reason.
"Madame, you said that endurance is also a form of pain. I want to take the opportunity of losing a lover to practice abstinence for a while, to accelerate the complete digestion of the Affliction potion."
A faint smile reappeared on the Demoness of Black's face.
"Your willpower is stronger than I expected. Although I wasn't using my full Charm on you just now, the fact that you could still refuse my proposal without me deliberately suppressing the Charm shows that your willpower is among the best among Sequence 5 Beyonders."
Is that so... What was I thinking of that made me refuse such a great temptation... Franca recalled, her expression changing slightly.

At that moment, she had thought of Jenna, and also of Lumian.
This both surprised and didn't surprise her.
The lack of surprise referred to thinking of Jenna at the critical moment of being Charmed, while the surprise was that she had also thought of Lumian!
The Demoness of Black looked around and said, "I'll wait for you to completely digest the Affliction potion. During this time, I have a task for you. Make contact with the core members of the Emperor Party. You should have heard the voice saying 'Your emperor has returned' that day. Those fantasists who worship Roselle and want to restore the empire seem to have new ideas because of this. Perhaps we can use them to do something.
"The specific situation will be told to you by Niceea. She was originally a spy employed by the government, specifically monitoring the Emperor Party. She has just become a Witch not long ago.
"This is her contact information...
"If you want to obtain the formula and ingredients for the Demoness of Despair from me, you need to make good contributions to the sect."
Franca took the paper handed over by the Demoness of Black and "sincerely" responded, "Yes, Madame Clarice."
The Demoness of Black didn't say anything more. Layers of dark spaces appeared in her eyes.
Her figure then disappeared from the room. She hadn't mentioned a single word about the complete grayish-white state of the scene.
Not long after, Lumian walked out of Jenna's bedroom, grabbed Franca's arm, and entered the full-length mirror in the living room.
The corpse pieces of the Demoness of Black in the area behind the mirror had completely disappeared.

Chapter 897: The Demoness of Black's Peculiarity

Lumian didn't rely entirely on his spirituality, but carefully searched the area behind the mirror, finding nothing.

"Could this have been the Demoness of Black's Mirror Person?" Franca asked doubtfully.

"The Demoness of Black's Mirror Person shouldn't be this weak." Lumian shook his head.

The two tried using Magic Mirror Divination, but received no effective revelation.

"Should we try asking the one with the most accurate divination results?" Franca suggested, barely concealing her fear and aversion.

After pondering for a moment, Lumian said, "Let's wait until we've consulted Madam Magician and the others before considering that option."

Perhaps Madam Magician could learn from the spirit world what exactly the dead Demoness of Black was.

Franca sighed in relief, turning her gaze to the mirror exit, saying with lingering fear, "Just now, the Demoness of Black completely ignoring the petrified state of the room nearly scared me to death. Such a glaring anomaly was right in front of her eyes, yet she acted as if she were blind. She could have at least pretended to notice!"

Even though I knew the reason I gave wouldn't convince you, I still acted professionally until the end, didn't I?

Lumian pondered for a moment before saying, "Perhaps she really didn't notice."

"Wh— You're even better at telling horror stories than I am!" Franca shuddered.

"It's possible that the death of this Demoness of Black will lead to a partial loss of sensory or spiritual perception in the real Demoness of Black, making her unable to perceive corresponding signs for a short time," Lumian speculated thoughtfully.

Franca nodded pensively. "So you're saying the Demoness of Black you killed was a part of the real Demoness of Black, split off for unknown reasons?"

"If we could master all the mystical knowledge related to the Demoness of Unaging, we should be able to find the answer to this question," Lumian affirmed.

"Not necessarily," Franca refuted, her thoughts jumping as usual. "Maybe this isn't a characteristic of the Demoness of Unaging, but rather a peculiarity of the Demoness of Black herself. Didn't you say her position and role in the Demoness Sect don't quite match

her Sequence?"
"That's a possibility," Lumian agreed with Franca's statement. "Whether it's you, or me and Jenna, if we want to go further on the Demoness pathway in the future, these secrets are something we must understand and master. This is also why we can't bypass the Demoness Sect and must interact with them."
But I want to switch to Hunter in the future... Well, Sequence 4 has to be Demoness of Despair, and maybe by Sequence 3 I can leave the Demoness Sect. But the Demoness of Unaging sounds very appealing—eternally youthful, hard to kill, skilled at resurrection, basically both tenacious and long-lived, without aging... Switch pathways at Sequence 2? But becoming an Angel is certainly very difficult, I only know of Madam Magician among the Angels in the Major Arcana... Franca hesitated and struggled internally.
She glanced at Lumian, suddenly grinning and saying, "I resisted the Demoness of Black's Charm just now!"
Her eyebrows and eyes seemed to be saying "Praise me quickly".
Lumian glanced at her. "I remember when I first met you, you were mature, dashing, charming, and had determination. You were a reliable older sister. But now..."
"No, a reliable older brother," Franca instinctively retorted. "Everyone has different facets. Can you act the same way with strangers as you do with brothers you can entrust your life to? Can you handle daily trivial matters in the same style as sudden crises? That would be exhausting."
She became smug again. "That was a Sequence 3 Demoness of Unaging. Although she didn't directly use Charm, just based on her beauty, the innate allure of a high-sequence Demoness, and her constantly changing aura, not many men could refuse her. But I did it!"
Lumian walked towards the dark exit leading back to the living room, casually saying, "Being able to refuse is a good thing. Although becoming the Demoness of Black's lover would indeed allow you to enjoy the body of a High-Sequence Demoness and the pleasure she brings, and gradually gain her true trust, it would also make you gradually become addicted, ultimately unable to extricate yourself, becoming twisted and corrupted, abandoning everything you originally valued."
"Right," Franca responded instinctively, then grabbed her ponytail and said, "That's not the point! Do you know why I was able to refuse the Demoness of Black's proposal?"
"You thought of Jenna at that moment?" Lumian pondered briefly.
Franca nodded with satisfaction, speaking in a tone that suggested her bro understood her best, "That's right!"

Lumian didn't ask for details and continued forward, preparing to return to the real world.
At this moment, Franca, both struck by inspiration and suddenly impulsive, added, "I also thought of you..."
As soon as the words left her mouth, the Demoness of Affliction froze, as if struck by lightning.
Dammit, why did I say that out loud?
Franca instantly wanted to dig a hole and crawl into it. At the same time, she quickly examined her previous state to determine if she had been manipulated or if it was truly a moment of impulse.
Seeing Lumian stop in his tracks, his expression becoming somewhat complicated, Franca finally confirmed that it was her spirituality's inspiration that made her impulsive, making her try this.
Just as Jenna had said before, Lumian needed to clearly know that he as a person was still valued, liked, and needed.
Since I've already said it, I might as well continue! Franca looked at the dazed Lumian, deliberately using a stubborn tone. "I don't know why I thought of you at that moment either. I thought we only had a purely physical relationship. Maybe it's because you were watching from the guest room."
This made Lumian instinctively scoff, as if wanting to refute.
He didn't say similar words, instead asking in a slightly lower voice, "What did you think about me?"
Dammit, you're really asking? Bro, who could say those things out loud!? While Franca was inwardly cursing, she smiled and looked Lumian up and down.
"I don't know why, but I feel like you've become even more beautiful after coming into contact with the Sealed Artifact formed by Omebella's remains. You can even rival the Sequence 3 Demoness of Black now. Well, at least in one of her auras."
Normally, beauty and prettiness couldn't be quantified and compared, but in the Demoness pathway, they could. Higher Sequences would have more feminine charm than lower Sequences, and were generally more beautiful, unless the lower Sequence Demoness was originally very attractive or improved her appearance through other means, such as using the Lie earring or coming into contact with the extreme corruption of beauty. Lumian satisfied both conditions.
Without waiting for Lumian to respond, Franca deliberately sighed, "At that time, I should have recalled you, whose charm could rival the Demoness of Black, but strangely, I remembered the initial you who always liked to act tough, like a little brother.

Maybe I didn't want to perform an improper act in front of a bro."
After a few seconds, Lumian glanced at Franca. "Perhaps Jenna and I have also become your anchors."
Hey, don't say it so seriously and textbook-like... Franca grumbled, then asked, "The Demoness of Black asked me to contact the core members of the Emperor Party. Could there be any hidden risks?"
"I thought she would make me deal with the special mirror world-related... uh, she doesn't seem to have withdrawn those tasks from earlier investigations of the Mirror People."
"The Emperor Party's new scheme might be related to the special mirror world," Lumian said in a flat tone.
"Ah?" Franca looked puzzled.
How are these connected?
Lumian explained simply, "Have you forgotten who the leader of the Mirror People is?"
"The mirror Emperor Roselle... the Emperor Party... I understand now!" Franca suddenly realized.
She immediately looked Lumian up and down. "Why do I feel like you've become smarter?"
"This is the result of blending the Demoness and Hunter pathways," Lumian said with a slight smirk. "Before, I used the Conspirer's ability to gather clues, study details, and deduce conclusions. Now, I first get some inspiration, come up with a few ideas, and then rely on Conspirer to analyze possibilities. This saves a lot of time. Just now, when the Demoness of Black mentioned the Emperor Party believing in Emperor Roselle and wanting to restore the empire, I naturally associated it with the mirror Roselle, and then connected the two."
"You're making me want to switch pathways..." Franca muttered as she followed Lumian back to the still grayish-white Apartment 702.
She took out 300 verl d'or from the Traveler's Bag and placed them under a small "stone".
This was compensation for the landlord.
After doing this, Franca looked back at the full-length mirror with a slight grayish tint and said in a disappointed tone,
"The Mirror Traversal ability of the Ice Amulet has been used up, and the Demoness of Black didn't give me another one..."
"You'll have a new one soon, although it can only be used about five or six times," Lumian said seemingly casually.
"What?" Franca looked at her companion in confusion. "Where is the new charm coming from?"
Lumian pointed at himself. "From me. Have you forgotten that I'm a Demoness of Despair and can make similar charms by praying to myself?"

"Oh, right," Franca was a bit captivated by Lumian's tone and expression just now.
Who could resist such a beautiful girl saying such things and making such gestures!
As Lumian opened the door to leave, Franca suddenly realized.
This guy's mood seems to have improved a bit; he can even occasionally answer my questions in a relatively light tone!
Hehe... Franca quickly caught up, her steps feeling light and airy.
...
At night, in Underground Trier, in a cavern of a certain quarry.
Lumian and Ludwig watched as Anthony successfully summoned a human-headed bird demon in the name of Mr. Fool, but failed to gain its acknowledgment and successfully sign a contract.
The human-headed bird demon, a creature from the spirit world, was part of the advancement ritual for Sequence 5 Dreamwalker of the Spectator pathway.
"If you had summoned it through normal means, I could force it to sign a contract with you," Lumian casually remarked as he saw Anthony dissolve the wall of spirituality and walk out.
But now it was summoned in the name of Mr. Fool, and both parties of the ritual were communicating in a peaceful state.
Anthony agreed with a nod.
"But it won't respond to normal summoning methods.
"I plan to pray to Mr. Fool again next month, hoping to receive the protection of his Angel. This is another method provided by Madam Justice, but such prayers should preferably be made after some time has passed."
"Next month, huh... In a few more days, we should be entering Mr. Fool's dream. Having a Dreamwalker would be much better..." Lumian's eyes shifted slightly as he turned his head to look at Ludwig beside him and asked, "Are there any ingredients that can help Anthony stay lucid in the dream? Even if it's just for a short time."

Chapter 898: Selecting "Ingredients"

Ludwig, dressed in children's formal wear, looked at the freshly cleaned "altar" and licked his lips somewhat regretfully, saying, "If we had caught that bird with a human head just now and stewed it together with a fat duck, we could have gained the ability to control our fear emotions in dreams, possibly gaining lucidity through fear...

"Additionally..."

The seven or eight-year-old boy began counting on his fingers, one by one.

"The gray beast from Planet Darbilla, cooked by roasting, can prevent one from getting lost in most dreams for seven days...

"The Black Dream Tapir, a spirit world creature that feeds on joy, happiness, excitement, desire, and other emotions in human dreams. Using its residual dust to make a cocktail can prevent the drinker from being deceived by the beauty of dreams, sinking into them, and refusing to wake up. At the same time, each time you drink that wine, you can clearly distinguish between reality and dreams for the next ten days...

"The King of Nightmares, an Angel-level creature that rules Planet Four Snake in the Y star system. Eating its gallbladder directly can permanently gain the trait of dream lucidity...

"..."

As Ludwig spoke, he grew hungrier and couldn't help but ask his now-female godfather for a few sandwich cookies to fill his stomach.

After he finished listing the ingredients he could currently remember, Anthony pondered and said, "Perhaps I've encountered a Black Dream Tapir before."

Seeing Lumian look at him, Anthony carefully said, "I met a patient at the psychiatric clinic a while ago. He had been having nightmares for three consecutive weeks, was mentally drained, emotionally numb, and very pessimistic.

"I tried regular psychological treatment on him, and also attempted to solve the problem using Beyonder abilities like Hypnosis, but these only prevented him from having nightmares for two or three days before reverting back to his original state.

"I couldn't figure out why it failed before, but now I suspect he might have been targeted by a Black Dream Tapir."

"Psychiatric clinic?" Lumian nodded while casually asking.

Anthony briefly explained, "To join the Psychology Alchemists, one needs to fully integrate into the circle of psychiatrists. I'm now officially a practicing physician at a psychiatric clinic."

Lumian made an affirmative sound and thoughtfully said, "The higher the Sequence of new members, the less likely they are to be trusted by those secret organizations. Sequences 9 to 7 are still okay, within the realm of wild Beyonders that ordinary people have a chance to reach. Sequence 6 is barely acceptable, but Sequence 5 involves rituals. Very few purely wild Beyonders can reach this level. Aren't you worried that becoming a Dreamwalker now will affect your subsequent joining of the Psychology Alchemists?"
Lumian made an affirmative sound and thoughtfully said, "The higher the Sequence of new members, the less likely they are to be trusted by those secret organizations. Sequences 9 to 7 are still okay, within the realm of wild Beyonders that ordinary people have a chance to reach. Sequence 6 is barely acceptable, but Sequence 5 involves rituals. Very few purely wild Beyonders can reach this level. Aren't you worried that becoming a Dreamwalker now will affect your subsequent joining of the Psychology Alchemists?"
Anthony smiled peacefully. "I bought the Dreamwalker potion formula and corresponding ingredients in batches from a member of the Psychology Alchemists. Madam Justice mainly provided financial rewards."
"I see..." Lumian turned to ask Ludwig, "What level of power does a Black Dream Tapir have approximately?"
"The strong ones have weak godhood, while the weak ones are equivalent to Sequence 7," Ludwig said with an expectant look.
"Going to the spirit world to find harpies or Black Dream Tapirs is not something we can accomplish, unless we ask Madam Magician or the Angel of the Holy Spirit who manages the spirit world on behalf of Mr. Fool for help," Lumian said to Anthony. "Do you have a way for me to enter that patient's dream? I want to confirm if it's a Black Dream Tapir and if there's a chance to capture it."
"I bought two dream entry charms from the Psychology Alchemists, and Madam Justice also gave me one," Anthony answered truthfully.
Lumian smiled, pulling up his cloak to cover his face. "Then let's 'visit' that patient tonight."
Anthony suppressed the disappointment of having that extremely beautiful face hidden, nodded, and followed behind Lumian, who was holding Ludwig's hand, as they headed towards the surface.
After walking several dozen meters, Ludwig turned his head to look at Lumian and said, "Mother..."
He simply felt that since his godfather had become female, the

address should be changed.
Mother... Lumian's heart skipped a beat, and his voice became stern.
"It's better you keep calling me godfather."
"Yes, Godfather," Ludwig readily agreed. "I've been having some bad premonitions lately."
"Bad premonitions?" Lumian asked as if pondering, "About yourself, or all of us?"
Ludwig answered quite honestly, "About myself."
Lumian nodded slightly and chuckled. "I think I know what it is. It's not a big problem, just endure it and it will pass.
"When the time comes, you'll have the opportunity to accumulate contributions to exchange for different parts of a demigod blessed's corpse."
Ludwig's eyes immediately lit up, forgetting that his premonition was leaning towards bad. "Alright, Godfather!"
...
In Quartier de la Maison d'Opéra, on Rue du Chapeau Noir, inside an apartment with drawn curtains.
Niceya, nearly 1.7 meters tall, stood in front of a full-length mirror, gazing at her reflection.
My face is fair and clean, my brown hair naturally wavy and hanging loose, my brown eyes deep yet clear, my lips red and moist, slightly parted to reveal two rows of white teeth. My figure is curvy, neither too tall nor too short, just right...
What an enchanting young lady.
Niceea gazed at herself in fascination, her right hand falling to her rosy lips, then slowly moving down towards her prominent chest.
She hadn't expected that the Beyonder power promised by that Demoness would be obtained in this way. When she was immersed in and proud of the various abilities brought by the Assassin potion, committing numerous crimes, her fate was already sealed.
She was forced to drink the Witch potion, becoming a woman, which strongly conflicted with and opposed her male identity of over twenty years.
Now she seemed to be split into two people: one angry, in pain, wanting to take revenge on those Demonesses and this world; the other conquered by her charming beauty, flawless figure, and a happiness different from before, falling in love with her current self, even wanting to drink higher Sequence potions to make herself more perfect and charming.
Suddenly, following her spiritual intuition, Niceea lowered her hand from her chest and abruptly turned around, looking towards

an armchair near the window.
There was someone there, who hadn't been there before.
The person had their arms resting on both armrests, body comfortably leaning against the chair back. A faintly visible ponytail of flaxen-colored long hair, brown eyebrows flying into the temples bringing both heroic beauty and seeming to pierce into the hearts of all onlookers, while those seemingly clear and tranquil lake-colored eyes held depths, as if hiding many emotions and thoughts, making one want to use all their passion to explore.
These features, along with the high and delicate nose, moist and rosy lips, smooth and slender neck, and the figure that made the lace flower shirt bulge, suddenly gave Niceea an urge to submit and kiss the back of the other's hand.
So beautiful... As beautiful as the few Demonesses I've seen before, but with a different aura, a more attractive aura and facial details... Niceea greedily looked at the beauty before her, surprisingly not questioning who the other was, nor making any defensive or attacking moves.
Is this what a newly advanced Witch is like... Franca, sitting in the armchair, silently shook her head.
She had already sneaked into this room since Niceea started admiring her mirror image, but Niceea was so indulged in her own beauty that she completely failed to notice, even wanting to perform an intense act.
Back then, when Franca drank the Witch potion, she was also stunned by her own beauty, feeling it was the anima in her heart, the woman she had always dreamed of. Fortunately, her personality was very cheerful, and being a transmigrator who had already switched bodies once, she didn't reject her current female body or consider it as another person. So she was only a bit narcissistic, not to the extent of truly falling in love with her female self.
After getting busy with the Tarot Club's tasks and meeting Jenna and Lumian, Franca's issues in this aspect became increasingly faint. However, being so beautiful, how could she not admire herself?
Although she was sitting and Niceea was standing, Franca smiled with a condescending attitude.
"I don't know if the Demoness of Black has told you, but for a long time to come, you will be my subordinate."
"Madame Clarice mentioned it. You must be Madame Franca?" Niceea's gaze was still roaming over Franca's body, with an urge to tear off the other's clothes and beg for pleasure, but she looked at her own chest and felt a wave of sadness.

She no longer had that ability now...
"Your vigilance is not high enough. If I were an enemy, you would have died several times already," Franca said, her red lips parting slightly. "Mirror Substitution is very important, but you can't rely on it completely."
Niceea was first startled, then broke out in a cold sweat. "Yes, Madame Franca."
Franca showed a slight smile, making Niceea's eyes light up.
"Give me the information on the core members of the Emperor Party."
Niceea nodded instinctively. "Understood."
She quickly walked towards the safe in the room.
...
In the administrative district, on Rue Lviv.
Wearing cotton pajamas and sleep pants, Kewell held a glass of red wine, sitting on the edge of the bed, reluctant to lie down and sleep for a long time.
He knew it would be the beginning of another long torment and endless pain.
Finally, he couldn't resist fatigue and sleepiness. After drinking that glass of red wine, he fell into a deep sleep.
In the hazy dream, Kewell was running, terrified to the point of near collapse, with a huge monster chasing him from behind.
Ahead was a cliff, and he didn't have time to stop, falling directly off it.
If it were a normal dream, Kewell would definitely wake up at this moment due to the free fall or directly switch scenes, but he didn't now. He crashed to the ground with a bang, seeing his body shattered into pieces everywhere in indescribable pain.
He let out a shrill scream.
At this moment, a bear-like shadow walked out of the darkness and began to lick the brain matter that had splattered out of Kewell, causing him to freeze, feeling even more pain and fear.
Suddenly, he saw the crimson moon rise in the sky, and a slender figure carrying a huge iron-black straight sword descended from the heavens.
The figure's hood was flipped up, black long hair illuminated by the crimson moon as if in a dream, seeming to pierce directly into the moon.

Chapter 899: Hunting in Dreams

When Lumian saw the bear-like shadow, he immediately confirmed it was a Black Dream Tapir based on his spiritual intuition.

He instantly drew the Sword of Courage, and under the illumination of the crimson moon in the dream, jumped down from the cliff top. The hood attached to his cloak flipped up, revealing black long hair, delicate features, and light blue yet deep eyes.

Boom!

Intense white-blue flames pinned the black bear-like shadow to the ground, blasting it into pieces.

Those shadow fragments quickly scattered and recombined into the shape of a tapir in the distance.

This wasn't a real dream. Most damage couldn't be reflected on the physical body, so it couldn't cause direct death, at most causing mental damage and turning one into a vegetable!

The bear-like Black Dream Tapir turned towards Lumian and let out a low growl.

With this growl, the scenery around Lumian changed, transforming from the primitive forest at the bottom of the cliff to Cordu under blue skies and white clouds, near green grasslands.

Lumian returned to Ol' Tavern, with a glass of absinthe floating with a dreamlike green color in front of him, surrounded by many Guillaumes and Pierres.

They were telling crude jokes and slandering people from other villages.

The familiar scent of alcohol pierced Lumian's nostrils. Outside the tavern window, Aurore's house was magically reflected, with a figure in a light blue dress and thick golden hair sitting on the roof, hugging her knees and gazing at the sky.

One of the Black Dream Tapir's abilities was to use the happy, joyful, and pleasant emotions it had absorbed to trap its target in the most nostalgic and beautiful scene, making it difficult to break free.

Seeing the female figure holding the iron-black giant sword freeze, the Black Dream Tapir ran over on all fours.

It wanted to devour this entire scene and all the positive emotions the other person generated from it.

At this moment, it felt something burning behind it and instinctively turned around.

It saw another Lumian, with invisible flames of anger burning in his eyes and intense black flames covering his sword.

The Lumian indulging in memories of Cordu quickly dissipated, leaving only a mirror.
Lumian raised the Sword of Courage burning with the Flames of Destruction, cleaving the Black Dream Tapir in two from top to bottom.
The more he longed for the beautiful life in Cordu, knowing it could never return, the more agitated and pained he felt, with anger surging!
In a slight explosion, black flames suppressing madness and violence clung to the two halves of the Black Dream Tapir's shadow, continuously burning them, making them noticeably fainter.
The Black Dream Tapir's shadow rejoined dozens of meters away, but was much weaker than before. Lumian's Flames of Destruction seemed to have truly damaged the part of its consciousness that had penetrated this dream.
Fear appeared in the eyes of this spirit world creature. It suddenly stood upright, its dark eyes tinged with blood-red.
It wanted to use the dream to transform into one of the target's most feared and terrifying forms, thereby intimidating the opponent and creating an opportunity for its consciousness to escape the dream and successfully return to the spirit world.
In the blink of an eye, the Black Dream Tapir's body swelled to an abnormal size, emanating an extremely insane, cruel, bloody, and violent aura.
It also created nearly invisible flames.
In the next second, the Black Dream Tapir itself let out an extremely terrified and agonized scream.
It was ignited by the invisible fire it had created, and its body was filled with the terrifying aura it had imitated, almost losing itself.
Seeing this scene, even Lumian was stunned for a moment, then curved his lips into a smile and said softly, "It's not so easy to imitate an image that can make me fear and dread."
"You think you can imitate the Blood Emperor?"
Imitating a true god inevitably means suffering backlash!
The Black Dream Tapir was already rolling in agony in the dream, unable to extinguish the invisible flames burning it.
It struggled extremely hard to detach from the dream. Lumian didn't stop it, but instead activated the black mark on his right shoulder and followed it to the spirit world.
The dream's owner, Kewell, in the form of dismembered corpse pieces, saw the girl who descended like the crimson moon falling twice slash the bear-like shadow monster and set it completely ablaze. His heart gradually became less fearful and afraid.

He stared blankly at that elegant and clean profile, at those slightly pursed light red lips, at the bright and beautiful face so different from the giant sword she wielded, feeling as if he were dreaming.
No, this really was a dream.
Lumian chased to a certain place in the spirit world and saw the Black Dream Tapir's true form already burning itself. Its agonized wails made the strange creatures around choose to stay away.
Lumian watched quietly and flicked a black flame bound with agitation and intensity towards it, letting it fall onto the Black Dream Tapir's body.
In just a few seconds, the spirit world creature burned to ashes, turning into a tiny amount of dark black powder.
Lumian reached out his palm and caught this powder.
...
In the apartment Lumian had rented for Lugano and Ludwig in Quartier de l'Observatoire.
The little boy dressed in children's formal wear with a small bow tie poured nearly 100 milliliters of Lanti Proof into a glass, then added the Black Dream Tapir's powder, lemon juice, ice cubes, a type of kilju, and other ingredients.
In the end, that full glass of strong liquor had a golden base, with green and black intertwining colors on top, looking quite beautiful.
"Wow, that drink looks very tempting," Franca exclaimed with an expectant look.
She sat very close to Lumian, while Jenna was on Lumian's other side.
Ludwig suddenly picked up that glass of "cocktail" and hid it behind his back.
He said very firmly, "There's only enough for two people to drink!"
"You and Anthony drink it." Lumian made the decision directly.
While Franca felt slightly disappointed, Ludwig beamed with joy.
He took another glass and poured nearly half of the "cocktail" into it, handing it to Anthony.
"This cocktail is called 'The Color of Dreams'.
"It takes effect one minute after drinking."
After Anthony took The Color of Dreams, Ludwig began gulping down the portion in his hand.
Franca deliberately said, "Isn't it not so good for someone so young to drink hard liquor? He should be properly educated."
She had already prepared her test papers, just waiting for Anthony to finish advancing to "test" Ludwig.
As Ludwig inexplicably shuddered, Anthony adjusted his state and drank that glass of The Color of Dreams.

It was both bitter and sweet, both strong and mild, both igniting the esophagus, mouth, and stomach, while bringing an intoxicating feeling.
This was a dreamscape.
While waiting for "The Color of Dreams" to take effect, Anthony began preparing the potion.
Franca took the opportunity to say to Lumian and Jenna, "The leader of the Emperor Party is a man called Louis. He claims to have blood from the Gustav family and to be a descendant of Emperor Roselle.
"According to Niceea's intelligence, some core members of the Emperor Party feel that on that day, after the Vortex incident, Louis Gustav became somewhat strange, more mysterious and more majestic.
"He's secretly planning something, and only a very few of his confidants in the entire Emperor Party know what it is.
"Niceea has a strong desire to express herself and take revenge on society. She volunteered to make contact with one of Louis Gustav's confidants. I plan to ask 007's side to cooperate and create an opportunity for her..."
Louis was as common a name in Trier and Intis as Pierre, Guillaume, and others.
Lumian nodded slightly, but before he could say anything, Anthony had finished preparing the potion and drank the dark liquid speckled with grayish-white light.
The taste of Dreamwalker was very similar to The Color of Dreams, both complex and chaotic, containing many elements.
Lumian and the others stopped talking, focusing intently on Anthony to guard against any accidents.
They saw their teammate's face sometimes covered with grayish-white scales, sometimes becoming bloodless, as if his soul had left his body, while his eyes were empty and lifeless, having lost self-awareness.
After a while, Anthony's eyes first became dark, then lit up with light.
"It succeeded," Anthony said, showing rare outward emotion. "That feeling of looking down on the world, on everyone's dreams, is truly addictive. I almost didn't want to wake up."
After this exclamation, he composed himself and briefly described the abilities brought by the Dreamwalker potion.
"I can directly see the appearance of the spirit world, see the sea of collective subconscious, and can 'guide' the target step by step to reveal their inner secrets through changes in dreams...
"I can also gradually influence the target by 'modifying' dreams,

making them do things they wouldn't normally do. This is equivalent to a gentler, more hidden form of Hypnosis that's less likely to be detected by higher-level targets, but it takes quite a long time to complete...
"Now I can directly enter dreams, hide in dreams, and jump from one dream to another, but the distance between two dreams can't exceed 500 meters..."
"A form of teleportation whose use is limited by environment and distance," Lumian commented briefly.
Anthony agreed with a nod."It's called 'Dream Traversal', and for me, the spirituality consumption is very small."
Lumian smiled and stood up, saying, "Now, every member of our team is at Sequence 5 or above."
...
A few days later, Anthony was working normally at Green Tree Clinic.
Near noon, a nurse brought in a patient.
It was Kewell, the young man aspiring to enter politics, currently serving as a staff member in the National Convention.
"Dr. Reid, I've been much better recently. I haven't had nightmares for several days," Kewell said happily to Anthony.
He still trusted Anthony quite a bit, after all, this psychiatrist had indeed improved his condition before.
"This is your own victory. You've passed through that stage," Anthony congratulated him without showing any abnormality.
Kewell touched his golden sideburns and hesitated before saying, "My condition improved four days ago. That night, I was having a nightmare again, but in the dream, a young girl descended under the illumination of a huge red moon and saved me.
"Sh-she was the most beautiful and charismatic girl I've ever seen, but my memory of that dream is becoming increasingly blurry. Mr. Reid, can you find a way for me to remember her permanently, to not forget her? Or let me draw her? Maybe there's a girl as beautiful as her in reality..."
Anthony looked at Kewell and said carefully, "I'm sorry, but I can't help you with this. Indulging in dreams will lead you to another extreme. As your psychiatrist, I can't push you towards an abyss. I must tell you, that's an illusion you can't reach."
Kewell was silent for a while, then let out a sigh of extreme disappointment. "Alright."
...
Quartier de l'Observatoire, Rue de la Gauche.
Alone in the apartment, Lumian stood by the window, pondering what he needed to do recently.

The treasure vault of the Blue Avenger... But Mr. Hanged Man only agreed to let me explore once...
Go to Bansy Harbor to find that potentially problematic place, use the corpse wax candle...
Just as Lumian thought of this, he instinctively half-turned his body and saw Madam Magician appear with starlight.
This Major Arcana card holder said with a smile, "Your reward should be ready to collect today. I'll take you to a place."

Chapter 900: History

Outside an abandoned ancient castle.

Madam Magician waited with Lumian for a while, then following the guidance of spirituality, took a step and arrived at a place inside, stopping in front of a vermilion door.

Knock knock knock, knock knock knock, knock knock knock. The Major Arcana card holder knocked three times in succession.

After a few seconds, a relaxed voice came from inside, "Enter, please."

With these words, the vermilion door slowly opened inward.

Lumian immediately saw heavy curtains, with sunlight struggling to shine through the gaps, bringing golden light that revealed floating dust to parts of the room.

On the other side, unaffected by sunlight, a black coffin was quietly placed instead of a common bed.

Opposite the coffin, near the sunlight, the desk was piled with letters.

At this moment, a man wearing loose pajamas was sitting in front of the desk, having just put down a fountain pen with a gold nib and black barrel, and folded a paper filled with words.

The man stood up, walked towards the door, with his back to the sunlight.

Lumian, having gained dark vision through the Demoness pathway, clearly saw the man's appearance: about 40 years old, average build, bronze skin, clean-shaven, black hair and brown eyes, soft features, with an indescribable sense of world-weariness in his eyes, and a small black mole below his right ear that was only visible upon close inspection...

"Good afternoon, Mr. Azik," Madam Magician greeted the gentleman respectfully.

Lumian also said similar words.

They spoke in ancient Feysac.

The middle-aged man called Azik suddenly seemed dazed for a moment, as if instantly receiving a large amount of information from the spirit world and His own subconscious.

He nodded and said in a gentle voice, "Thank you for your help, allowing me to wake up early and my soul to be healed to some extent."

"It was mainly this young friend who made the contribution." Madam Magician pointed to Lumian beside her.

She then introduced to Lumian, "This is Mr. Azik Eggers, the son of the Death from the Fourth Epoch, and former Consul of the Balam Empire."

Son of Death, former Death Consul of the Balam Empire... Lumian suddenly recalled part of the content from the Fool's Church canon: The Angel of Death has followed our Lord for the longest period of time and is the consul of the Underworld...
Could this be the Angel of Death beside Mr. Fool's divine throne? Lumian greeted him again.
"A Demoness." Azik glanced at Lumian and nodded slightly, "You have the aura of the source of the River Styx."
The Angel of Death refers to the river connecting two worlds as the source of the River Styx? Lumian was stunned for a moment and said, "That's the seal of the Underworld Daoist."
"Underworld Daoist..." Azik muttered softly, as if He had never heard of this existence.
Madam Magician smiled and changed the subject. "Mr. Azik, we came to visit you today mainly to inquire about some matters."
Azik looked at the corridor outside. "Let's take a walk around the castle, talk as we go. This is an important memory from a period of my life."
"Alright." Madam Magician made way.
Lumian and she followed behind Mr. Azik, who was presumably the Angel of Death, through the corridor, along the stairs, step by step upwards.
Along the way, ancient wall lamps embedded in the walls lit up one after another, burning with a cold and pale-white flame.
Lumian saw oil paintings hanging on both sides of the corridor, some of Azik Himself, but with more lively expressions, even smiling, and some of beautiful ladies with their hair tied up and children playing with wild deer.
Azik's gaze slowly swept over these paintings, occasionally lingering. After quite a while, He asked Madam Magician and Lumian, "What do you want to ask?"
Madam Magician, wearing a purplish magician's robe today, asked straightforwardly, "Mr. Azik, do you know why the Primordial Demoness sought cooperation with your father, the Death of the Fourth Epoch, after the War of the Four Emperors? Did you notice any problems with the Primordial Demoness?"
Hearing this question, Lumian was stunned for a moment, then realized. Indeed, who better to ask than someone who personally experienced those events of the late Fourth Epoch?
He is indeed an ancient Angel who has lived for over a thousand years...
Madam Magician should be about the same, but my spiritual intuition tells me she's still quite young...
Azik recalled for a few seconds and said, "There was a gap of over a

hundred years between the end of the War of the Four Emperors and the beginning of the Pale Disaster. The Primordial Demoness's arrival was probably in the middle of this period. We don't know exactly what She discussed with my father; I only know that She declared to us Her intention to avenge the Blood Emperor, to make all seven gods of the Northern Continent perish, and to bring the Blood Emperor's deity corpse back to the surface from Underground Trier."

Is this true love? Despite it being two against seven, She wanted to avenge the Blood Emperor...

No, if the Primordial Demoness had achieved Her goal then, it would have meant that the special mirror world would no longer be sealed, able to reveal all its problems, but the current Demoness Sect doesn't seem to have such ideas, and even intends to nail the coffin lid more firmly, not letting those Mirror People achieve their goals...

Also, was it really not the Emperor of the Underworld, that Death, who delivered the final blow to the Blood Emperor? The Uniqueness of the Red Priest fell into the hands of Death, and there's also something like the Samaritan Women's Spring under Trier... Lumian was filled with strong doubts, but didn't interrupt Mr. Azik's narration.

Azik said, "Without a doubt, the Primordial Demoness is the most charming woman in this world. Every living being who sees Her will inevitably be fascinated by Her, including me, my brothers and sisters, and even the undead in the Underworld. Even our father was inevitably attracted to some degree."

"Even the undead are attracted to the Primordial Demoness? This is already a charm at the level of concepts and authorities..." Madam Magician sighed and asked, "Was your father, the Death of the Fourth Epoch, bewitched by the Primordial Demoness when he finally decided to forcibly accommodate the Uniqueness of the Red Priest?"

Lumian had gained some understanding of the connection between Death and the Uniqueness of the Red Priest when reading the 0-01 sealing information, but this was the first time he clearly encountered the essence of the matter.

As thoughts raced through His mind, Azik shook His head slightly and said, "The Primordial Demoness's instigation should be one of the reasons, but I don't think it was the main one, otherwise my father wouldn't have waited decades to do that."

Madam Magician made a terse sound and repeated her previous question, "Did you notice anything unusual about the Primordial Demoness?"

Azik passed by an oil painting, lightly running His finger over it. "Every time I encountered the Primordial Demoness, I would lose my senses. How could I possibly notice any problems with Her?
"If there was anything unusual, it was that on a few occasions, Her charm was a bit weaker than normal. That should have been Her deliberately restraining Her charm."
As a Demoness, Lumian knew that a Demoness naturally emanating charm and deliberately restraining charm would indeed present two different states, but after experiencing the false Demoness of Black incident, he suspected there might be other possibilities.
Madam Magician thought for a moment and changed the subject. "Mr. Azik, do you know about the body of the Phoenix Ancestor in the depths of the Underworld?"
Azik turned His head to look at the two women.
"My father thought it would be a waste to just destroy the body of an ancient god like that. He believed it could serve a more important purpose, such as helping my father better and more completely control the Underworld, or enabling Him, as Death, to possess stronger power.
"Those in the death domain will never reject powerful corpses that can be controlled by themselves."
Before Madam Magician could ask further, Mr. Azik added, "My father also mentioned that the body of the Phoenix Ancestor, this ancient god, held some secrets."
"Secrets?" Madam Magician asked curiously.
Azik paced forward and said, "He never told me the specifics, only that the story of the Ancient Sun God killing the Phoenix Ancestor at the end of the Second Epoch was false. Well, more accurately, the process was correct, but the result was wrong. The Phoenix Ancestor was only severely wounded by the Ancient Sun God, not dying on the spot. She escaped to the Southern Continent and went into hiding."
"Yes, if the Phoenix Ancestor was truly killed by the Ancient Sun God, that divine corpse wouldn't likely have been obtained by Death and appeared in the Underworld, unless it was His arrangements again." Madam Magician expressed agreement.
Azik continued, "Similarly, the Giant King Aurmir didn't perish on the spot either, supposedly escaping and managing to pass on his power to his eldest son, the later God of Combat, Badheil, before dying."
Is there any connection to the Omebella matter? Hmm, the two ancient gods who weren't killed on the spot by the Ancient Sun God seem to be related to Omebella—one's corpse is laying eggs,

currently incubating Omebella, while the other is Omebella's husband... Lumian glanced at Madam Magician, and after obtaining her consent, asked, "Mr. Azik, what is the relationship between the Phoenix Ancestor and the Goddess of Harvest Omebella?"

Azik shook His head.

"I was born in the Fourth Epoch. All I know about the history of the Second Epoch is what my father occasionally mentioned."

Saying this, He smiled at Lumian and said, "Speaking of which, I should give you some reward."

As He gently raised His right hand, a large number of white bones gushed out from the ground, forming a giant skeleton.

The skeleton respectfully handed a shiny Loen gold pound to Mr. Azik.

Azik took the gold coin and presented it to Lumian. "Is this acceptable as a reward?"

"Thank you," Lumian said sincerely, accepting the lucky coin that bore Mr. Fool's aura.

Chapter 901: The Final Inquiry

Madam Magician silently breathed a sigh of relief when she saw Lumian receive the last lucky coin.

Although the Major Arcana card holder had roughly confirmed through prophecy, divination, and psychological analysis that things would develop this way, the subject involved was an Ancient angel, the son of a true god. No one could be certain the result would necessarily unfold as expected. If there had been a deviation, they would have had to formulate a new plan.

Madam Magician produced a small golden bottle inscribed with mysterious symbols from somewhere and smiled at Azik Eggers, saying, "Mr. Azik, this is some excess water from the Samaritan Women's Spring. It's something produced by corruption from the power at the source of the River Styx. It has multiple effects including repairing souls, inducing sleep, bringing complete death or true dreams, and granting lucidity in dreams. We'd like to ask for your help in making it manifest only one of two qualities—either 'inducing sleep' or 'granting lucidity in dreams'—and enhancing that effect."

Repairing souls... Lumian paid no attention to the fact that there was leftover Samaritan Women's Spring water from what he had previously collected. His focus was entirely on the "repairing souls" effect.

Could this gradually make Aurore's soul fragments whole again?

"No problem," said Azik, taking the small golden bottle containing the Samaritan Women's Spring water.

Madam Magician, seeming to sense Lumian's thoughts, casually explained to him, "The Samaritan Women's Spring water does indeed have the effect of repairing souls, but it's limited to repair only. Just as 'limb regeneration' abilities can regrow lost arms and legs, but can't grow a whole new person from an arm or leg. That falls under the domain of the Great Mother."

She had previously answered the question of what exactly the fake Demoness of Black was, believing that neither she nor the one with the most accurate divination results knew the precise answer. This implied that the relevant secrets must involve the special mirror world.

"Even some repair effects are good," Lumian said softly after a moment of silence.

At this point, a blurry, upright, terrifying giant snake appeared behind Azik, almost touching the illusory sky.

Pale-white flames burned in the giant snake's eye sockets. It seemed to have a pair of thick, exaggerated wings on its back. Its

body was covered in large dark green scales that appeared black, with what looked like white feathers protruding from between the scales.
Although Lumian couldn't clearly see the appearance of each feather and scale or the strange symbols they bore, just directly gazing at this phantom image gave him the sensation of rapidly dying, his skin withering and shriveling.
This was damage that Mirror Substitution couldn't transfer.
Fortunately, the illusory winged giant snake quickly coiled itself, wrapping layer upon layer around the golden bottle that couldn't even fill one of its eye sockets.
Then, the terrifying giant snake rapidly faded, instantly shrinking into the golden bottle.
Lumian gradually returned to normal.
Azik handed the golden bottle back to The Magician. "Anyone who touches the spring water in the bottle will fall into a long sleep, myself included.
"It will have a slight effect on true gods, but not much, unless that deity is already very weak or in a state of slumber.
"If you want someone who has fallen asleep because of this to wake up, you'll need to collect some more water from the Samaritan Women's Spring and process it in a similar way but with the opposite effect, or seek help from a true god with the corresponding authority."
Lumian was not surprised that the processed Samaritan Women's Spring water would only have a weak effect on true gods.
Even the remnant soul of the Blood Emperor could occasionally wake up and cause trouble in the mysterious river that was the source of the Samaritan Women's Spring, let alone this secondary derivative!
Madam Magician handed the golden bottle to Lumian. "This might be useful in the dream, but it's uncertain."
Lumian nodded slightly and placed the bottle of processed Samaritan Women's Spring water into his Traveler's Bag.
Madam Magician then turned to Azik and curtsied. "Thank you for your help. We have achieved all our objectives today. Is there anything you need us to do?"
Azik cast His gaze towards the oil paintings on both sides of the corridor and said with a somewhat dazed expression, "Nothing at present. I've been asleep for several years. I want to walk around and see the changes in this world."
Madam Magician didn't say more, and left with Lumian after bidding farewell.
Before being enveloped by starlight, Lumian turned his head for a

glance and saw the former Death Consul, with eyes full of world-weariness, standing silently in front of an oil painting, wordlessly caressing its surface with His fingers.

...

In the evening.

Except for Lugano, who was informed he would have a period of vacation to arrange freely, Lumian, Franca, Jenna, Anthony, and Ludwig all gathered in the apartment on Rue de la Gauche in Quartier de l'Observatoire.

Madam Magician, wearing a cream-colored high-collar dress with gold embroidery and a wide-brimmed hat for sun protection, stood by the window and said to the five lucky coin holders,

"I must emphasize once again the potential risks.

"In Mr. Fool's dream, if you die, you will die in reality. If you lose control or go mad, you will lose control or go mad in reality. If you are directly corrupted by that Celestial Worthy or some other entity, you will also suffer corruption in reality. If you develop psychological illnesses or experience intense emotional fluctuations, your sleeping body in reality will bear corresponding problems.

"Mere injury or fatigue has very little effect on reality. You can quickly recover by leaving the dream and briefly waking up, or by spending time healing within the dream.

"In that dream world, you can use all your abilities, but their effects will be limited to the level of Sequence 7. The essence of this limitation is that Mr. Fool's self-awareness has not yet recovered. In other words, if the Mr. Fool in the dream realizes that Beyonder abilities can achieve effects corresponding to Sequence 6, your levels will recover to that Sequence accordingly.

"Similarly, except for special items like the Samaritan Women's Spring water, your other equipment in the dream is essentially derived from your consciousness and is also limited.

"The good news is that those hostile entities and Beyonders driven by the Celestial Worthy who enter Mr. Fool's dream through other methods will be subject to similar restrictions. However, that Celestial Worthy can manage the dream to some extent and in certain aspects. Unless it's the final moment, you'd better avoid the Celestial Worthy and have no contact with Him."

At this point, Lumian raised a question, "In Mr. Fool's dream, what identity and form does the Celestial Worthy exist in?"

If this could be clarified, they could effectively avoid that Celestial Worthy.

Madam Magician shook her head.

"If we knew that, the previous lucky coin holders wouldn't have

been kicked out of the dream so quickly or had their actions restricted.
"Confirming the Celestial Worthy's identity in the dream is a key point of your mission this time."
Madam Magician spoke about other matters related to the dream, and finally asked seriously,
"Now, you can make your own choices. Are you willing to hold Mr. Fool's coins and enter his true dream, attempting to awaken him?
"If you're unwilling, we won't force you, but you'll need to follow the guidance of spirituality and pass on the lucky coins in your possession as soon as possible.
"If you're willing, after the matter is concluded, whether Mr. Fool is successfully awakened or not, we will reward you generously."
"I have no problem with it," Lumian, wearing a cloak but without the hood, was the first to answer.
"Me too." Jenna was the second.
Franca and Anthony followed, also willing.
The only one hesitating was Ludwig. This little boy with a red bow tie's expression changed several times, resisting something unknown.
Finally, he looked at Franca and Jenna, and said through gritted teeth, "I'm willing to go into the dream."
Although the food eaten in the dream is fake and illusory, at least there's no studying and exams!
Franca, who had already digested the Affliction potion, glanced amusingly at Ludwig and whispered in Jenna's ear, "This child really isn't smart enough. As soon as I heard Madam Magician's descriptions earlier, I clearly came to a conclusion: If you digest a potion in Mr. Fool's dream, it will happen in reality too!"
Jenna responded quietly, "Let's tell Ludwig this fact after we enter Mr. Fool's dream."
At this moment, Madam Magician nodded slightly and said, "I'm very glad you've made this choice. Let me remind you one last time, try to delay being kicked out of the dream as much as possible. Once you've been kicked out more than three times, subsequent entries will either result in immediate ejection or complete restriction, leaving you as mere observers."
"Yes, Madam Magician," Lumian and the others stood up one after another.
Specks of brilliant starlight fell, enveloping them.
In the blink of an eye, the five appeared inside a luxurious villa.
"This is also in Trier. Choose your own rooms, but don't be next to each other, in case one person is discovered and affects the others nearby," Madam Magician briefly introduced.

"Alright." Having made the decision, Franca was no longer hesitant and eager to try.
After Lumian and the others had settled on their rooms, Madam Magician said to them as they returned to the corridor,
"Now go to bed and sleep while holding your lucky coins."
"Is that all it takes?" Franca asked in confusion.
Isn't that too simple?
Madam Magician chuckled. "No, this is just the first step. Miss Justice will need to intervene later."
"Mm." Lumian and the others didn't ask further. They returned to their chosen rooms, gripped their shiny lucky coins, lay down on the firm yet springy beds, and covered themselves with soft blankets that smelled of sunshine.

Chapter 902: The Platform

Before Lumian had a chance to fall asleep through Cogitation, his vision suddenly went dark. His consciousness felt as if it was being pulled by an invisible force, plummeting straight into the depths of the earth.

He instinctively resisted for a moment, then experienced a sensation of leaping out of a dark seabed to the surface.

His vision was immediately illuminated by a twilight-like radiance, shining through a giant glass pane divided into countless small squares, bringing limited light to the darkness.

In this dim light, Lumian saw a black steam locomotive with two oil lamps hanging from it, a domed platform, and at the edge of the platform near the steam train stood Madam Magician in her cream-colored dress with gold embroidery and wide-brimmed sun hat.

Beside Madam Magician stood a lady in a simple green dress, with a golden retriever crouching at her feet.

Upon seeing the lady in green, Lumian felt surprise and confusion.

Another Demoness? Does the Tarot Club have other Demonesses?

"She's so beautiful," Lumian heard Franca whisper in admiration. "But she doesn't seem like a Demoness. Her aura is different, unless she's already a Sequence 3 Demoness of Unaging..."

Hearing this, Lumian noticed similar issues: The lady in green had lustrous golden hair, partly tied up in a bun with the rest flowing smoothly down. Her emerald eyes were like the most beautiful gems, yet deep enough to seemingly reflect the innermost consciousness of all who beheld them. Her features were exceptionally delicate, her beauty comparable to the Demonesses, with an elegant air tinged with a girl's purity and clarity.

Such an aura was very rare among Demonesses below Sequence 3—at least neither Lumian nor Franca had ever seen it before.

Moreover, Lumian found that looking at this lady didn't invoke the desire he usually felt when facing Demonesses. Instead, he felt a sense of peace, warmth, and steadiness.

This familiar feeling triggered Lumian's spiritual intuition, evoking certain memories.

Combined with what Madam Magician had said earlier, he quickly came to a conclusion. "Good evening, Madam Justice!"

The elegant green-clad lady with a hint of girlishness must be the Major Arcana card Justice, one of his Psychiatrists!

"Good evening, Madam Justice." Anthony was the second to speak.

After Franca and Jenna politely greeted Madam Justice, Franca's eyes suddenly widened.

She pointed at Lumian and said, "H-how did you turn back into a man?"
Uh... Lumian reflexively examined himself and found he wasn't wearing the black cloak, the swells in his chest had subsided, and his white shirt, black vest, and dark trousers fit as they used to.
Meanwhile, Franca was still wearing her lace-flowered blouse and cream-colored riding pants, with a small red jacket. Her chest was prominent and her ponytail swayed gently—she looked every bit a Demoness.
At this moment, Madam Justice said with a soft laugh, "This is entering a true dream, which is different from normal dreaming.
"Using a Dream Charm causes the body to dematerialize and directly enter the dream. Whatever you look like in reality is how you appear in the dream. Normal dreams depend on real-time perception—your dream image might be your current self, your past self, or even an altered self. But in a true dream, if you can maintain consciousness, what appears will be your subconscious self-perception.
"In other words, Seven of Wands's subconscious still considers himself male."
I see... Lumian felt a mix of joy and disappointment.
Franca blurted out, "Then what about me? Why am I still..."
She suddenly closed her mouth, looking as if she had been struck by lightning, losing part of her soul.
Madam Justice gently comforted her, "Accepting the present doesn't mean forgetting the past. As long as you remember who your past self was and what kind of life that self lived, reconciling with your current body won't lead you to lose control. The acting principles of the Demoness Sect may not suit everyone; it depends on one's personality and experiences.
"Remember, everyone is special."
Franca opened her mouth but couldn't speak, her emotions still somewhat dejected and low.
Jenna quietly reached out her right hand and grasped Franca's palm.
Even if this had been Lumian not long after arriving in Trier, he wouldn't have mocked Franca for claiming to be a man while unconsciously considering herself a woman. Let alone now. He turned his attention to survey the platform.
It wasn't much different from a typical steam train station, with an overpass high above and stairs leading to different platforms.
At the edge of the overpass, a tall figure leaned against the railing, gazing this way. His black trench coat fluttered slightly, and he seemed to be wearing red gloves.

On the stairs leading to this platform, the lady in the gloomy, intricate dress carrying four heads was openly observing below. In contrast, halfway up the stairs to another platform stood a little boy with a mercury-colored bow tie. At the end of those stairs, Mr. Azik Eggers, whom Lumian had met not long ago, held His hat in hand, silently watching the black steam locomotive.
17:00
On the stairs leading to this platform, the lady in the gloomy, intricate dress carrying four heads was openly observing below. In contrast, halfway up the stairs to another platform stood a little boy with a mercury-colored bow tie. At the end of those stairs, Mr. Azik Eggers, whom Lumian had met not long ago, held His hat in hand, silently watching the black steam locomotive.
On the waiting chairs of Mr. Azik Eggers' platform sat the Knight of Swords Maric and the temperance faction demigod Sharron, facing Lumian and the others, motionless like puppets brought in to serve as an audience.
Lumian brought his gaze back and noticed that the golden retriever beside Madam Justice was wearing glasses and carrying a small brown bag, looking very gentle and scholarly.
Lumian suddenly recalled the dog and female figure he had seen after his first psychological treatment at Mason Café.
So that was Madam Justice... It's a pity Madame Susie isn't participating in this mission to Mr. Fool's dream, otherwise I could thank her in person... Lumian regretfully returned his gaze to Madam Justice and Madam Magician.
Madam Justice smiled at him and said, "Because you've actually become a Demoness of Despair, and your subconscious knows this, you can freely switch between your subconscious self-image and your current true appearance. This might help you create perfect disguises in the dream and play a crucial role in key scenes."
Why can't I do that... Franca silently wailed.
Lumian nodded with understanding. "Lie can't create good disguises? Because it can only perform at a Sequence 7 level, and the Sequence 6 Faceless of the Seer pathway is needed to adjust appearance and physique?"
"Yes, Lie at Sequence 7 level can only modify appearances to a certain extent, equivalent to the best makeup techniques," Madam Justice nodded slightly, then turned her head to the golden retriever beside her. "Susie, do you have anything you want to tell them?"
Susie... Lumian's eyebrows twitched as he suddenly shifted his gaze to the bespectacled golden retriever with the small bag.
The dog spoke in a voice familiar to him, "What I need to tell you is

that Mr. Fool is very vigilant and cautious. He's not easily trusting of others."
Hearing the golden retriever speak, everyone except Anthony and Ludwig looked shocked and surprised—if the golden retriever hadn't been called "Susie", Lumian certainly wouldn't have been so astonished by an animal speaking human language.
After a brief silence, Lumian adjusted his mindset and said sincerely, "Thank you for your reminder, and also for your previous treatment, Madam Susie. And thank you too, Madam Justice."
Having seen a child eating Devil eyeballs, what's so strange about a talking dog?
If they were Trierien, this might not even be unusual—maybe they just liked being dogs and found a way to transform themselves into dogs!
Lumian then asked Madam Magician and Madam Justice, "I have one more question. What is Mr. Fool's identity in the dream?"
Awakening Mr. Fool would surely require interacting with him in the dream!
Madam Justice and Madam Magician exchanged a glance before producing a brownish-yellow envelope tied with thin cotton string.
"This contains information about Mr. Fool's dream identity, but you can only open it once you've truly entered that dream.
"It also contains cash, identity documents, and maps prepared for you."
Lumian took the envelope and pointed at the iron-black steam locomotive stopped beside their platform. "We take this?"
"Yes, after you board, I'll have it travel to the edge of this dream world. You must hold tightly to your lucky coins. When the train reaches the edge of the dream world, they will help you enter Mr. Fool's dream. The first time must be this complicated, but afterwards you'll be able to enter and exit that dream normally using the lucky coins," Madam Justice explained briefly.
Lumian looked at Jenna, Franca, Anthony, and Ludwig, then nodded to the two Major Arcana card holders.
"We can board now."
The black steam locomotive was no different from the common types seen in Trier. Lumian and the other four occupied two rows of seats on the same side, while the other passengers around them were blurry and indistinct shadows, as if the creator of this dream had been too lazy to elaborate on them.
Through the window, they saw Madam Magician, Madam Justice, and the others waving to them.
As they instinctively waved back, Lumian and the others heard a

shrill sound: Ooo!
With the whistle's cry, a clanking noise began, slow at first then quickening, changing from gentle to frequent. The scenery outside the window gradually receded.
The iron-black steam locomotive carrying Lumian, Franca, Jenna, Anthony, and Ludwig left the platform, heading towards a distant horizon shrouded in dream-like fog.

Chapter 903: Everything's Familiar

After the platform had disappeared from view, Lumian observed the conditions inside the train carriage.

The seats were made of wood, the windows were narrow, and the lighting was insufficient. The other passengers seemed to be conversing, but there was no sound, as if they were performing a silent play.

Jenna and Anthony, experiencing something like this for the first time, were also quietly examining their surroundings. Ludwig was painfully yet intently eating imaginary delicious snacks, while Franca was in low spirits, leaning against the carriage and gazing at the scenery outside.

Vast pastures and lush fields were quickly receding, interspersed with old castles and quaint villages, beautiful like an oil painting.

Gradually, Franca saw palaces formed of frost, houses flying above the clouds, and pairs of crystal shoes dancing in a distant square...

The scenery outside the steam train began to become dreamlike, as if various fairy tales were merging together.

Before long, the iron-black steam locomotive entered the fog, and nothing could be seen clearly outside the windows.

Lumian, Franca, and the others instinctively gripped their lucky coins tightly. No one spoke, maintaining silence, worried that any unnecessary movement might prevent them from entering Mr. Fool's dream.

In the thick, dream-like fog, the iron-black steam locomotive that had emerged from fantasy continued to race forward with a clanking sound.

At some point, Lumian felt the clanking of the train wheels hitting the rail joints grow fainter and fainter until it disappeared.

Suddenly, they heard a female voice: "Does anyone want anything? Boxed meals, snacks, ice cream, beverages, local specialties, beef jerky..."

Franca sat up straight, her expression both shocked and bewildered.

She abruptly stood up, turned around, and looked towards the entrance of the carriage. She saw a woman wearing a white shirt and a purple-red long dress, with a small purple-red soft hat, pushing a multi-layered metal cart towards them.

The cart had colorful items arranged on different levels, beverages in peculiar bottles, and stacked boxed meals.

Wh— Franca's gaze instinctively swept to both sides of the multi-layered cart, finding that the previously shadowy passengers had become very clear. They were wearing clothes that often appeared

in her dreams, either quietly spending time on different brands of phones or conversing softly with companions, with occasional sounds of children crying.
This was a scene Franca had dreamed of seeing again, but encountering it at this moment, in this setting, made her shiver with an inexplicable fear.
Is this, is this Mr. Fool's dream?
"What's wrong?" Lumian stood up as well, asking in a low voice.
He had already noticed the changes in the carriage, even the seats and backrests had become soft, as if wrapped in thick, blue-dyed cotton.
He also noticed that the passengers' clothing, style, and way of speaking were distinctly different from his group.
But this wasn't the reason for Franca's dramatic change in expression.
This is a dream, after all. Nothing should be surprising!
Franca's lips quivered a few times. She looked back at Anthony, who was sitting in the row in front with Ludwig, then lowered her voice and said to Lumian and Jenna, "It's exactly the same as a similar scene from my world..."
Lumian immediately understood why Franca had reacted that way earlier. He deliberately said in a nonchalant tone, "Have you forgotten about the Celestial Worthy? He also comes from that world. Isn't it normal for corresponding scenes to appear in a dream He's involved in?"
"You're right..." Franca showed a self-deprecating smile. "I was too excited, too scared, and overlooked this point."
Indeed, this is very normal!
This is also the sleeping dream of that Celestial Worthy!
Jenna also stood up, looked around for a few seconds, and said, "So, does this mean we've entered Mr. Fool's dream?"
As she spoke, she opened her right palm and found that beneath the shiny lucky coin was a train ticket that read: "Ningbei—Yangdu"
Although Jenna only recognized the numbers on the ticket, it didn't prevent her from understanding the meaning of those strange characters. Similarly, the passengers sitting across the aisle understood her Intisian, turning their heads to look at them curiously. However, upon noticing their strange attire, they seemed to find it normal and turned away.
According to Madam Magician's previous explanation, in Mr. Fool's dream, there was no need to worry about language barriers or unfamiliar text. This was essentially communicating with Mr. Fool's subconscious, and Mr. Fool knew all languages.

Of course, being able to intuitively understand the meaning of unfamiliar text didn't mean one could comprehend it deeply. Jenna had been worried about this issue before, but Madam Magician had reassured them. Now, Jenna finally understood why Madam Magician wasn't concerned about this problem:
These characters were familiar to Franca, and she could serve as the most reliable translator!
"It should be," Lumian cautiously put away the lucky coin, holding only the train ticket.
After noticing that other passengers could understand their speech, Jenna asked Franca in a very low voice, "What are those things the people are holding?"
They look very strange...
Lumian immediately used the Bottle of Fiction to enclose their two rows of seats, using the window as support, but keeping the barrier transparent.
Franca suddenly became energetic, completely forgetting her previous dejection and shock. She introduced with a smile,
"Those are cell phones, products of scientific development. They integrate telegraph communication, theatrical performance, mirror messaging, and other effects. They have even more functions that you can't imagine. Later, I'll get a few and teach you how to use them in detail. It's too difficult to explain clearly now!"
As she spoke, Franca's face was full of pride. "That's a T-shirt, those are jeans, those are sneakers..."
Just as she said this, Ludwig started shouting, "I want a boxed meal, I want snacks, I want ice cream, I want beverages, I want beef jerky!"
The little boy was salivating, completely forgetting the fact that food in dreams was all imaginary.
"Uh, Madam Magician reminded us to try to obey the law," Franca looked at Lumian. "I remember there was cash in the envelope Madam Justice gave us."
Lumian opened the envelope and took out a stack of brand new, bright red banknotes, and deactivated the Bottle of Fiction.
"Two thousand per person," he told his companions.
"That's okay." Franca nodded, then looked at Ludwig with a worried expression. "This child's meal expenses for one day would probably be over a thousand..."
And that's assuming he didn't eat anything good!
"There will always be ways to make money." Lumian spent two hundred to get five boxed meals.
Franca hesitated for a moment and said, "Let's give them all to Ludwig. Although I'd love to relive the taste of familiar food, we

shouldn't waste money here. There will be better choices later."
After piling all five boxed meals in front of Ludwig, Jenna asked in a low voice, "Can we look at Mr. Fool's identity information in the dream now?"
She noticed that many passengers around were sneaking glances at her and Franca, so she sat back down.
Lumian considered for a moment and said, "We haven't reached our destination yet. Let's wait a bit longer. We'll look at it after we get off at our destination station."
Caution is paramount!
As he spoke, Lumian took out a mirror and tossed it into the gap between Ludwig and the backrest.
He was using mirror illusion magic to conceal the exaggerated situation of Ludwig being able to eat five boxed meals in one go and still only be half full.
He had noticed earlier that someone was secretly pointing what Franca called a phone in their direction. His spiritual intuition told him it would be better not to let abnormal matters appear in front of the public.
"Doesn't this train make any clanking noises?" Jenna and Franca started chatting casually.
Franca said with a boastful tone, "Of course not, this is the latest train model, and it's incredibly fast!"
She pointed to the display screen at the front of the carriage, which showed the real-time speed using numbers and symbols familiar to Jenna.
Thank you, Emperor Roselle!
Franca enthusiastically explained all the details that confused Lumian, Jenna, and Anthony, occasionally correcting their misconceptions, such as:
"Is this place even more open than Trier? I see people can expose their arms and legs..."
"No, no, no, we're far behind Trier. This is just freedom of dressing, and it doesn't offend others in public places. It's a manifestation of being cultured and civilized. In private, it's not as open as Trier at all!"
"Won't our current appearance be too strange?"
"Don't worry, just say we're going to a comic convention!"
"What's a comic convention?"
"..."
During this exchange, the train finally emerged from the fog, and a magnificent city with countless towering buildings appeared ahead. Each of these buildings seemed to rival mountains in height, their surfaces covered with glass curtain walls that

gleamed golden in the sunlight.
Lumian and Jenna instinctively held their breath, as if approaching the realm of gods.
It was a miracle on earth, a city on the mountain top!
Franca also stopped her explanation, her lake-blue eyes fixed on the city, her expression a mix of nostalgia and sadness.
The train gradually slowed down, entered the city, and finally stopped at a clean, bright, and spacious platform.
The other passengers in this carriage suddenly disappeared, as if the dream weaver could no longer maintain them. Lumian and Franca exchanged glances with the others, then led Ludwig off the train, followed by the "strangely dressed" Jenna, Franca, and Anthony.
Along with the numerous passengers from other carriages, they took self-operating escalators to leave the platform. Under the guidance of their "guide" Franca, they made their way out of the station to the square outside, with no one speaking along the way.
Seeing the surrounding people gradually dispersing and the area becoming more open, Lumian took out the brownish-yellow envelope given by Madam Justice. He extracted the documents related to Mr. Fool's dream identity and spread them out for his companions to see.
Franca immediately saw a name written in her native language at the top of the document: "Zhou Mingrui."

Chapter 904: The Driver

After quickly reading through the information, Jenna remarked in disbelief, "Mr. Fool's identity in the dream is so ordinary."

There's no sign at all of him being a great existence!

"What should we do next?" Franca looked at Lumian. "Find an opportunity to make contact with Mr. Fool?"

The document had already roughly outlined Zhou Mingrui's, that is, Mr. Fool's dream identity's daily routine. As long as Lumian and the others weren't too unlucky, they could soon see and interact with Mr. Fool.

Earlier, when she saw the name Zhou Mingrui, Franca's heart had suddenly skipped a beat.

She hadn't expected that the name Mr. Fool used in the dream wasn't in the style of the Northern and Southern Continents, but rather very close to the style of her country before she transmigrated.

Of course, this was consistent with the current city's situation. But if the name "Zhou Mingrui" belonged to the Celestial Worthy rather than Mr. Fool, Franca would understand and accept it more easily, because the title "The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings" itself was in the style of her country before her transmigration.

Could it be that the Celestial Worthy has gained the upper hand, to the extent that Mr. Fool's dream city is the same as my motherland, and even took a name like "Zhou Mingrui"? As Franca muttered internally, Lumian thought for a few seconds and said, "Let's not contact Mr. Fool yet. We'll observe the people and events around him for a few days."

As the team leader, Lumian didn't just give orders; he briefly explained, "Mr. Fool himself is certainly under close monitoring by that Celestial Worthy. If we rashly contact him, it would be easy for the Celestial Worthy to detect anomalies, lock onto our identities, and kick us out of the dream.

"Additionally, although Madam Justice's information includes Mr. Fool's daily routine and the people he frequently interacts with, I still want to observe for a while myself. This isn't about distrusting the abilities and intellect of the Major Arcana card holders, but I feel they know too much background information, which might interfere with their judgment, preventing them from discovering subtle hidden issues."

"Mm, cognitive bias," Franca summarized Lumian's meaning using a term very much in the style of the current dream world.

Lumian nodded.

"Some people mentioned in the information might no longer be in contact with Mr. Fool, but I'll still observe them to look for possible commonalities and differences."
"Then let's first go rent a place to settle down in one of these areas marked on the map," Jenna said, holding a city map taken from the brownish-yellow envelope.
The marked locations were all residential areas close enough to Mr. Fool's current residence to overlook that area, but not too close.
"I have no objections," Franca said instinctively. "Then I'll get a taxi first."
As she spoke, she reached into the pocket of her red jacket, fumbling for a few moments before realizing something. "No phone..."
She immediately suggested, "Let's buy five phones nearby for a few hundred each, no, four phones and one children's smartwatch.
"Without phones, life in this city will be very difficult and inconvenient. Sometimes, what can be done with a phone doesn't need to be done with Beyonder abilities. The latter is more likely to lead to our identities being exposed. I think the previous lucky coin holders might not have paid attention to this aspect and were in a hurry to contact Mr. Fool, which is why they were quickly discovered by the Celestial Worthy and kicked out of the dream."
"Alright," Lumian nodded slightly, holding Ludwig's hand as the boy ate a sausage.
He looked around and asked, "So, where should we go to buy them?"
Franca chuckled. "Lend me the Lie earring for a moment."
After putting on the silver-white earring, she adjusted her hair color and eye color, slightly modifying her nose bridge and facial contours. In an instant, she blended in with the passersby around her, though still with a hint of mixed-race features.
At this moment, a slightly chubby young man passed by. Franca approached him in a few steps and smiled, "Could you help me with something?"
The young man, dazzled by her bright smile and beautiful face, blurted out, "What is it?"
Franca said a bit embarrassedly, "I lost my phone, could you..."
The chubby young man instinctively took out his own phone, then came to his senses and asked warily, "You're not going to ask to borrow my phone to make a call, are you?"
Such an old scam!
Franca sighed and replied, "I just wanted to borrow some money for food."
Before the man could respond, she smiled again. "Just kidding,

how could I use such a cliché scam?
"I just wanted to ask if there's a mall or phone store nearby. If you don't know, could you help me check on your phone?"
Sounds harmless, with the phone in my hands the entire time...
The man cautiously searched and earnestly gave Franca directions.
Franca waved with a smile. "Thanks!"
The man's eyes glazed over again, and he asked as if struck by inspiration, "Do you want to be a celebrity, or maybe a live streamer?"
"Are you a talent scout or from a Multi-Channel Network (MCN) company?" Franca asked curiously.
It had been a long time since she had chatted with someone like this.
The man came to his senses and said with an awkward smile, "Neither, but if I could sign you, I'd become a talent scout or start an MCN company! Beautiful, can I get your number?"
Franca finally understood that this guy was indirectly complimenting her looks. Everything before was just a setup; this was the real point.
Tsk tsk, people these days... Even when I used to play murder mystery games, there weren't so many tricks... Franca inwardly sighed and said with a sincere face, "Didn't I tell you? I lost my phone, so I'll have to change my number later too."
With that, she didn't give him a chance to harbor any hopes, waved goodbye, and jogged back to where Lumian and the others were.
The chubby young man watched her go and muttered to himself enviously, "A group of otakus..."
Half an hour later, Franca led Lumian and the others out of the nearest mall to the roadside.
They had used the ID documents and cash provided by Madam Justice to buy four phones, one off-brand children's smartwatch, and five SIM cards, spending a total of 2,400.
But except for Franca, who was constantly tapping her screen, and Ludwig, who occasionally licked his children's smartwatch, Lumian, Jenna, and Anthony were just holding theirs like bricks, not knowing how to use them yet.
"I'll teach you once we've settled in!" Franca said, having linked the ID documents and associated bank cards with the corresponding apps. Instead of going to a nearby branch or ATM to deposit money, she directly took out a micro-loan and started to call a car.
Just then, a motorcycle roared past, almost grazing her, the wind from its passing slapping her face.

Franca angrily looked at the motorcycle, cursing under her breath, "Racing on the street? Are you in a hurry to be reborn?"
As soon as she finished speaking, the motorcycle swerved to avoid a light truck from a moving company, only to find a hole dug for road repairs ahead, surrounded by yellow metal barriers.
The motorcycle desperately swung its tail and crashed into a nearby utility pole, making the concrete pillar visibly shake.
With this commotion, motorcycle parts flew in all directions.
Franca watched in astonishment, murmuring, "It's not my fault..."
Although Demonesses were indeed skilled at curses, they didn't work through mere words!
Just as she was about to call for an ambulance to see if the motorcyclist could be saved, the helmetless rider stood up without a scratch, pushing the severely deformed motorcycle away from the scene.
"He's fine after that?" Franca blurted out in shock.
A thought immediately flashed through her mind, and she whispered in unison with Lumian, "A Beyonder?"
Lumian immediately said to Jenna and the others, "Let's go take a look."
Taking advantage of the green light, they crossed the intersection to the accident site, seeing that even the utility pole was slightly deformed and cracked.
Lumian cast his gaze to the ground, crouched down, and pulled out a rather ordinary-looking white paper figurine from a nearby flower bed.
The paper figurine was already tattered.
"Paper Figurine Substitutes? Was that motorcyclist from the Seer pathway?" Franca quickly deduced.
Jenna frowned slightly and said, "One of the Celestial Worthy's subordinates?"
"Possibly. Let's use Dream Divination later to recall his appearance," Lumian nodded, stuffing the paper figurine back into its original position and quietly using a Demoness's black flame to erase any traces he might have left.
Franca grumbled, "That guy didn't look anything like a Beyonder from the Seer pathway, racing on the street and even crashing. All the Seers I know are cautious and cunning, full of schemes."
As she complained, she used her phone to book a car.
Soon, a white sedan stopped in front of them.
Although Franca had already explained what internal combustion engine cars and electric cars were, when they actually got in, Jenna and Lumian were still a bit shocked.
The ordinary electric car, similar to a hired carriage, felt luxurious,

as if the words "civilization" and "technology" were written everywhere.
Anthony sat in the front passenger seat, while Jenna, Franca, and Lumian holding Ludwig squeezed into the back. Even so, the space didn't feel too cramped.
The cold air from the air conditioner dispersed the summer heat as the vehicle carried Franca, who couldn't conveniently explain things in such a setting, and the silent Lumian and others to their destination in just over twenty minutes.
As they got out of the car, Anthony gave Lumian a meaningful look, gesturing for him to look at the driver.
Lumian walked to the front door of the vehicle and peered in, noticing that the driver had a wide forehead, a gaunt face, slightly curly black hair, nearly pure black eyes, and a monocle that looked as if it were carved from crystal in his right eye socket.
Amon!
The driver, who resembled Amon, seemed to recognize Lumian. He smiled and waved, then started the car and vanished at the end of the road.
"Amon?" Franca and Jenna had also seen the driver's appearance. "How did he get in? Is it a false image created by Mr. Fool in the dream?"
"It should be real. He clearly recognized me," Lumian replied gravely.
Franca exhaled and said reassuringly, "It's okay. Madam Magician said that in the matter of putting the Celestial Worthy to sleep and awakening Mr. Fool, that individual is on the same side as us."
Lumian looked at the intersection where the car had disappeared and said in a low voice, "But Madam Magician also said that that individual probably doesn't want Mr. Fool to wake up too early."

Chapter 905: New Arrival

On the top floor of an old building without an elevator, Franca looked at the slightly musty rental apartment and grumbled, "In this location, for such a rundown place, even renting the entire unit costs 2200..."

The rental apartment had three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen, and a living room that doubled as a dining room. Each room was very small. The master bedroom had a balcony, and the building was over 30 years old.

Even for such a rental, Franca had to use a Demoness's Instigation and leverage her social skills to negotiate the price down to under 2,500 from the female landlord, with only one month's deposit and rent instead of the usual three months'.

"It's fine," Jenna said, fairly satisfied with their current accommodation.

It was much better than where her family lived before her mother passed away.

Lumian glanced at the cash in his hand and said to Franca, "We only have 3,000 left. Even with what you borrowed, it's not even 6,000. And we still need to buy some ordinary clothes—we can't go out looking so eye-catching every day."

"It's okay," said Franca, now in a familiar environment and no longer as worried as before. She smiled calmly and confidently, "I can borrow again from each app, and so can you all. Added up, it's enough to support Ludwig for several months. Given such a long time, are you afraid we can't earn money?"

"Is borrowing money so easy here?" Jenna asked in surprise.

In Trier, whether pawning items at a pawn shop or borrowing from loan sharks, it wasn't a simple matter. The corresponding items or people had to have some value. But just now, she saw Franca tap her phone a few times and successfully borrow a sum of money.

Was it like this for everyone, or did the beautiful Demoness get special treatment?

Franca pursed her lips and remarked, "It is quite easy. Even the poorest people have some remaining value. If all else fails, they can be taken to have their organs sold..."

Obviously, she didn't like how easy online loans were, but now she had to take out a bunch of micro-loans to support Ludwig and the whole team, so she couldn't say the rest of what she was thinking.

Lumian took out the golden box that Madam Magician had returned from the Traveler's Bag and asked thoughtfully, "Are there places here that buy gold?"

The space contained in his Traveler's Bag had also significantly shrunk, now only equivalent to a storage room. He couldn't stock up too much food for Ludwig.
"There are, but they're strictly regulated. We'll see if there are any illegal channels later," said Franca, who was well-read and had some understanding of gold trading.
"Illegal channels?" Lumian said pensively, "When we try to sell gold through such channels, won't they see us as outsiders, easy to bully, afraid to report to the police on such matters, and just take our gold without paying?"
Franca gave Lumian the side-eye. "You want to fish again?"
"This is called receiving gifts from kind-hearted people." Lumian smiled. "For this kind of black-on-black crime, they probably won't report to the police. It shouldn't affect our law-abiding image, right?"
Through long-term daily influence from Aurore and Franca, and being in the corresponding environment, Lumian had gradually become proficient in using certain words and sentences.
"Can't you just find a proper job?" Franca said with a laugh.
"A job would only interfere with our observation of the people and events around Mr. Fool," Lumian reasoned.
"That's not necessarily true," Franca instinctively retorted. "What if that job could help you become Mr. Fool's colleague? Wouldn't that make observation more convenient?"
"That's true..." Lumian's gaze moved from Franca's face to Jenna and Anthony, as if considering who should apply for the corresponding job.
"Speaking of which, the company Mr. Fool works for was started by Emperor Roselle," Franca recalled the contents of the document. "The Emperor's real name wouldn't happen to be Huang Tao, would it? According to the Major Arcana card holders, it would occasionally be the Emperor's own projection, but most of the time it's a fake person woven by Mr. Fool in the dream. Well, now only the latter possibility remains. Who knows how long it will be before the Emperor gets a chance to resurrect..."
As she spoke, Franca suddenly laughed. "The Emperor's eldest daughter, Princess Bernadette, is named Bernie Huang in Mr. Fool's dream. Haha, what a cute name. Is this Mr. Fool's sense of humor?"
"You should restrain yourself a bit. Bernie Huang, no, Princess Bernadette often projects Her consciousness here. She seems to have an item similar to the lucky coin," Jenna reminded Franca with a smile. She had just read the corresponding description in the document.

By now, Lumian had made his decision.
"I or Anthony will apply for the job. If a Demoness enters the Emperor's company, it might cause quite a few troubles and make it hard to keep a low profile."
Franca and Jenna nodded heavily, both remembering the Emperor's words of wisdom.
Lumian brought the topic back to the gold matter.
"If I sell this golden box in the dream, will my golden box in reality disappear?
"If not, couldn't we sell it over and over by leaving the dream and returning?"
"..." Franca, Jenna, and Anthony were momentarily speechless.
Is this the influence of Amon's boon?
After a few seconds, Lumian mused, "It probably won't work. Mr. Fool is a great existence who controls errors and loopholes. He wouldn't leave such an obvious problem. I suspect selling gold in the dream is equivalent to sacrificing it to him..."
"I think so too," Franca agreed.
As they spoke, dozens of quiet and eerie black flames gathered around the two Demonesses and the male-appearing Lumian.
These twenty to thirty black flames flew to various parts of the room, burning away any possible insects.
Originally, Lumian could have engulfed the entire house in the Demoness's black flames to complete the cleaning, but now he could only exert the standard of a Sequence 7.
After finishing the cleaning, Franca began teaching Lumian and the others how to use their phones, and guiding Ludwig on how to play with his children's smartwatch.
Unknowingly, the sky gradually darkened.
"I'm hungry!" Ludwig's voice suddenly rang out.
Franca lifted her gaze from her phone, looked at the sky that had already turned to dusk, and sincerely exclaimed, "Phones are so much fun..."
Time flies so fast!
The amazed Lumian, Jenna, and the others put away their phones and went out to find a restaurant to avoid Ludwig causing trouble out of extreme hunger.
They hadn't even allocated who would sleep in which room yet.
After leaving the old residential complex, Franca glanced at the row of shops by the roadside and said with a smile, "Based on my previous observations, this city's prototype is one I once toured. The cooking standards of these street-side small shops might be even higher than big restaurants, and more suitable for people like us who can't afford high-end places.

"Let's eat at this one first, lest Ludwig can't wait."
She was pointing to a small restaurant just to the left of the residential complex. Business seemed decent, with several tables set up on the sidewalk.
Before going out, Lumian and the others had already adjusted their hair color and eye color using the Lie earring, and modified their facial features. Although they still attracted hidden or bold glances as handsome men and beautiful women, at least they didn't stand out as obviously foreign to their surroundings.
Franca chose one of the tables on the sidewalk, took the menu, and asked with a smile, "The specialty is spicy food. Can you handle it?"
"Didn't you say before that the essence of spiciness is a kind of pain? What's there to not handle?" Lumian replied nonchalantly.
Franca gave him a challenging look, then turned to Jenna with a smile and said, "Not everything is spicy. There are sweet and sour dishes, and some that focus on umami flavors. Two dishes I really like, Kung Pao Chicken and Yu Xiang Shredded Pork, can be made non-spicy. The proportion of sour, sweet, and other flavors might be different in each restaurant. It takes luck to find the type that suits your taste best. The two most satisfying times I've had were once in a time-honored restaurant and once in a hole-in-the-wall place like this.
"The Kung Pao Chicken in the time-honored restaurant was adjusted to a lychee paste flavor, using only chicken thigh meat, tender and not dry. The Yu Xiang Shredded Pork in that hole-in-the-wall place only used chopped scallions as a side vegetable, with sweet, sour, salty, and pickled pepper flavors all mixed into the sauce and stir-fried with the meat. This is different from the common practice, but very appetizing and delicious...
"Uh, should we order a few bottles of beer? We rarely have a full team dinner like this. Although I don't like bottled beer, I can make do with it..."
Ever since introducing phones on the train, Franca had maintained an excited state as if back on her home turf, constantly introducing and sharing, with a gleam in her eyes like a hint of sunlight.
Lumian didn't mind this fellow showing such enthusiastic host-like attitude, taking over all the things a team leader should say. Instead, he was infected with a sense of calm, relaxation, and joy because of it.
Summer nights darkened late, and even now, just after 7 o'clock, the sky was still somewhat bright. The breeze blowing past the tables and chairs on the roadside brought a hint of coolness from

inside the restaurant and other shops, making the eating and drinking crowd increasingly lively. Some were laughing loudly, some were eating while fiddling with their phones, completely without the restraint of sitting on the sidewalk.

Jenna observed intently for a while, then said softly to Franca, "There's a strange sense of relaxation..."

She had seen people eating by the roadside in Quartier du Jardin Botanique and the market district before, but never had a similar feeling.

"This is one of the things I miss about the past," said Franca, her eyes bright, having already ordered the food.

At this moment, a woman with smooth, glossy black hair tied in a simple ponytail, wearing a short-sleeved T-shirt and fitness shorts, dragging sandals, came to the entrance of the small restaurant and said to the busy owner, "How long do I have to wait for takeout?"

"Sia, you're late today," the owner commented in a familiar tone.

Before Ms. Sia could answer, someone suddenly shouted from nearby, "Catch the thief! Catch the thief!"

A figure ran past the tables and chairs, tightly gripping a diamond necklace.

As he ran past Ms. Sia, she suddenly raised her foot and delivered a side kick.

Bang!

The thief was kicked several meters away, falling to the ground in pain, momentarily unable to get up.

"This gal is quite fierce," Franca said, her eyes full of admiration.

Lumian looked at Ms. Sia's profile and said in a low voice, "Is that Sia Tas, the one who shares an apartment with Mr. Fool?"

Chapter 906: Suspicious Details

Sia Tas? Franca quickly examined the face and ears of the woman surnamed Sia, partially hidden by her glossy black hair.

According to information provided by the Major Arcana card holders, Sia Tas, who currently rented the same apartment as Mr. Fool, was an ancient elf in reality. Her boyfriend Mobet was a viscount from the Fourth Epoch's Solomon Empire and a member of the Zoroast family. Both of them have been dead for many years.

Franca quickly withdrew her gaze, not letting Sia Tas notice her observation.

This was the professionalism of an Assassin.

As for her previous blatant staring, she wasn't worried about being suspected at all. Sia Tas's action of kicking away the thief had drawn everyone's attention.

Franca lowered her voice and said to Lumian and the others, "Her ears are slightly pointed, and her facial features are consistent with local residents. It should be Sia Tas."

Damn it, could the ancestors of the elven race really be transmigrators? Except for a few minor details, Sia Tas could pass as a local in this city without any flaws!

She even wanted to chat with Sia Tas!

Lumian glanced at Ludwig, who was gnawing on the end of his chopsticks, and said thoughtfully, "Could Sia Tas be that Celestial Worthy? Or could she be a Beyonder subordinate of that Celestial Worthy?"

"..." Both Franca and Jenna were stunned by this question.

"It doesn't seem likely..." Franca resisted the urge to look at Sia Tas again.

Jenna pondered for a moment and then suggested, "The Sia Tas in the dream should be a fake person woven by Mr. Fool's subconscious based on memories."

"A fake person could also be that Celestial Worthy, or could be used by that Celestial Worthy," Lumian said with a smile.

For some reason, seeing his smile, both Franca and Jenna's hearts beat a little faster. They felt that his male form had lost some of its handsome aura compared to before, but gained more beauty. When he smiled, it was like sunlight shining on his face.

Oh right, although Lumian's subconscious is still male, the modifications to his body by the potion has long been recognized and remembered by his subconscious. In situations not involving gender identity, the enhancement of appearance and increase in charm from the Demoness pathway would definitely be reflected

in the dream... *What should this be called, an Incubus?* Franca first had a sudden realization, then started complaining internally.
Lumian continued, "Sia Tas is one of the closest people to Mr. Fool, living in another room in the same rental apartment. Why couldn't such a person be that Celestial Worthy? Why couldn't she be controlled by that Celestial Worthy in some way, becoming His puppet, being used by Him?
"The closer someone is to Mr. Fool, the more suspicious they are."
"Right," Anthony rarely took the initiative to share his own views. "In the information, the Oracle mentioned that Sia Tas and Mobet only had contact with Mr. Fool's Angel of Redemption, the incarnation walking on earth, that great adventurer Gehrman Sparrow, and they are already dead. To Mr. Fool, they are neither important nor special. Why would the ones living with Mr. Fool, so close to him, be these two, and not other fake people, such as the dream counterparts of some Major Arcana card holders?"
"It is indeed worth suspecting." Franca and Jenna both nodded slowly.
Lumian immediately added, "I mainly wanted to make one point clear: at this stage, we should focus on observation, supplemented by analyzing the contents of the information and collecting information. We absolutely must not contact Mr. Fool, and we should try not to contact these people around Mr. Fool. The closer they are to Mr. Fool, the less we should contact them."
"But if we don't make contact, how can we conduct further investigations later? How can we determine the identity of the Celestial Worthy? How can we gradually awaken Mr. Fool?" Franca raised a question.
Lumian chuckled. "We're just not making contact at this stage. After we complete the observation work, we will make contact with purpose and plan. That will also be a form of probing."
"Probing..." Jenna and Franca vaguely grasped Lumian's idea.
They were about to inquire further when the cold dishes were ready and brought to their table along with several bottles of beer.
After the waiter left, Franca picked up her chopsticks, easily opened the bottle caps, and poured a glass for everyone except Ludwig.
Children can only drink soda and dairy products!
Franca tapped her glass full of golden liquid on the table and said with a smile, "The past cannot be retrieved, the future cannot be known. Let's toast to the fact that we're all still together now and can enjoy life!"
Lumian shook his head with a smile, but still clinked glasses with Franca, Jenna, and Anthony. Then, he tilted his head back and

gulped down the glass of beer.
Franca was the first to finish drinking. She wiped her mouth and saw Lumian's Adam's apple moving as he drank, with a little beer seeping from the corner of his mouth. She suddenly froze.
Damn, why do I find his Adam's apple movement so sexy...
Is this what an Incubus is like?
Anthony glanced at Franca and Jenna drinking boldly and their unconscious small movements, then at the men and women around furtively looking at them and Lumian. He silently sighed and tried to make himself even less noticeable.
Ludwig had already started quickly eating the cold dishes like garlic pork slices, cold sliced pork head meat, spicy shredded pig ears, smashed cucumber, and mixed shredded vegetables.
Lumian took an inconspicuous mirror from his pocket and placed it in a corner of the table.
Franca quickly came to her senses and once again filled up the beer for each team member, except for the child.
She raised her glass again and said, "Cheers to past experiences and future hopes!"
Her passionate tone and high spirits gave Jenna and Lumian a slightly tipsy feeling, while Anthony felt like he was back in his military camp days.
Amidst the crisp clinking sounds, they temporarily set aside their inner depression and worries about this mission, just enjoying the present moment.
...
In the rental apartment.
"We spent six hundred?" Jenna asked, sounding a bit pained.
They had spent one-tenth of their funds in just one meal!
"It's actually not expensive. This fellow eats like ten people or more, and we also drank alcohol." Franca waved her hand. "It's fine, I'll arrange a few more micro loans as backup, and you should each get one too. We still need to go out and buy some T-shirts, casual pants, jeans, sneakers. How about we find time to go to the wholesale market tomorrow?"
At times like this, brand, fit, and design didn't matter—cost-effectiveness was the top priority!
Lumian took out the remaining food from the Traveler's Bag, which had shrunk in space, and while placing them on the dining table, he said, "We also need to replenish food for Ludwig. He needs to eat every two to three hours."
"Mm." Franca pointed to the rooms. "Anthony, you choose first."
Anthony didn't hesitate and chose the smallest bedroom, which was also not on the same side as the other two.

Franca turned to Lumian. "You'll sleep in the master bedroom with Ludwig?"
"The second bedroom will do. Except for his big appetite, he's a normal kid in other aspects. He won't be cramped sleeping in the second bedroom's bed," Lumian understood that one of his tasks was to keep an eye on Ludwig, not letting him leave the dream prematurely out of fear and refusing to come back.
"Alright, Jenna and I will sleep in the master bedroom." Franca smiled.
In the time that followed, she borrowed another 10,000 in micro-loans, with Lumian, Jenna, and Anthony each getting 3,000.
After doing this, Franca, with great willpower, put down her phone, turned on the light, and carefully read the information related to Mr. Fool, which she had only quickly browsed before. Lumian and the others each occupied a position, equally focused on reading.
Before they knew it, the night grew deeper.
Ludwig's another cry of hunger brought them back to alertness, and they stopped reading and discussing.
"Even just reading the information about Mr. Fool provided by the Major Arcana card holders, I feel like my head is in a daze, gradually losing myself... Is this the status of a great existence?" Lumian seriously assessed his previous state and solemnly said, "When we study this information again later, we shouldn't exceed half an hour each time."
He raised his right hand and rubbed his temples, finding that the consumption of spirituality was also significant.
"Mm." Franca stood up and looked out the window. "Let's go eat barbecue outside Mr. Fool's neighborhood. Although Mr. Fool doesn't come out for late-night snacks every day, at least we can observe the people who frequently appear around the neighborhood."
Jenna was about to respond when she suddenly noticed the scenery outside the balcony.
She unconsciously walked over and gazed out beyond the residential area, across the street.
The bright and warm lights shone out from countless buildings and windows, like the Milky Way had fallen to the ground, but with an added human touch.
This night view was more vast and dreamlike than that of Trier and the New City of Silver, seeming to carry more dreams.
Lumian also focused his gaze for a while, until Ludwig tugged at the sleeve of his shirt.
"Let's go." He withdrew his gaze and headed towards the door.

Franca said to Jenna, "Later, we'll find a tall building with a good view to take another look."
After leaving the neighborhood, they followed the map and circled around to the outside of Mr. Fool's neighborhood. They casually chose a barbecue stand and inconspicuously observed the people and events around them.
Just as the grilled beef arrived, Franca noticed that Lumian's gaze was fixed in one direction for a long time, not moving.
"What's wrong?" she asked curiously.
Lumian pointed with his chin in that direction. "I see the Oracle."
The Oracle? Franca and Jenna looked in that direction and saw a hooligan with yellowish eyebrows and hair color.
The man was holding a stack of flyers.
"Oracle Danitz?" Jenna asked for confirmation.
Lumian nodded slowly. "I don't know if it's a consciousness projection or a fake person in the dream..."
Seemingly sensing their gaze, Mr. Fool's Oracle Danitz suddenly turned around and looked over.
Then, he quickly walked up to Lumian and the others, glanced at Ludwig, and asked with a smile, "Would you be interested in Dream Tutoring Classes?"
Tutoring classes... Ludwig's pupils suddenly dilated.
Crack!
He bit through the bamboo skewer.

Chapter 907: Corpse

Lumian examined Oracle Danitz's deep blue eyes for a few seconds, then gave Jenna a meaningful look.

Now, Franca no longer needed to digest the Affliction potion.

Jenna instantly understood Lumian's intention and asked Oracle Danitz with a smile, "Do you have any courses suitable for children?"

She pointed at Ludwig, causing him to tremble and turn pale.

This made Jenna feel the obvious digestion of the Affliction potion.

Danitz's eyes lit up, and he said with a big smile, "Of course we do! From foreign language education and logic courses for 3-year-olds to vocational training for adults, we have it all!"

As he spoke, his gaze couldn't help but move back and forth between Jenna and Franca's faces a few times, seemingly stunned by their beauty.

Many celebrities with makeup and photo editing might not be this beautiful!

Jenna took the flyer and looked at it carefully, then said with a smile, "When we have time, I'll bring the child to take a look."

She kept in mind the plan Lumian had made, focusing on observation for now and not rushing to make contact.

Hearing Jenna's words, Ludwig's face showed obvious bitterness. He could only grab a handful of grilled beef skewers and fiercely tear off more than a dozen pieces of meat sprinkled with chili powder and cumin to soothe his inner wounds.

"Alright, remember to mention my name for a discount!" Danitz marveled at how such a young beauty already had such a big child, assuming she must have not studied well in high school and was taken home by some hooligan to have a child before finishing school. He then gave his name, "My surname is Da, and my given name is Nizi."

After saying this, his gaze lingered on Jenna and Franca's faces before he unhesitatingly turned around to continue looking for targets to distribute flyers.

"He should be a fake person in the dream woven by Mr. Fool's subconscious." Anthony, who had been observing silently, made his judgment.

Lumian nodded, then added, "Indeed, he didn't show any special qualities an Oracle should have, and he obviously didn't recognize me."

At this point, Lumian smiled. "Since he's woven by Mr. Fool's subconscious, it shows that in Mr. Fool's perception, the Oracle is someone who likes women but won't be confused by them, with

relatively strong willpower in this aspect."
This conclusion was drawn from Danitz's behavior of being attracted by the beauty of the two Demonesses yet not flirting, not lingering, and not talking too much.
"It might not be strong willpower, but professional ethics that prevent him from flirting with women while working, or he might have someone he likes and is willing to restrain himself for," Franca said, eventually showing an ambiguous smile. "Does this mean what's written in the Adventurer series is true?"
"The rumors at sea say the same," Lumian confirmed Franca's guess.
In the time that followed, the four of them mainly observed and didn't eat much, while Ludwig turned his grief into appetite, eventually causing them to spend 400.
Franca put the last piece of grilled eggplant into her mouth, chewed a few times, and stood up somewhat reluctantly, saying, "It's time to go back."
This was truly a nostalgic taste.
As they circled back to their own neighborhood, Jenna glanced at the bright street lamps on both sides, then at the pedestrians walking in the summer night breeze in the dark night. She had the illusion that it wasn't near dawn now, but just the beginning of the night.
In Trier, before becoming a Beyonder, she only dared to walk on the streets at midnight relying on her reputation as the Red Boots' mistress and her concealed revolver. Even so, she didn't dare to walk too far home and usually had to stay at Franca's place. But in this metropolis in Mr. Fool's dream, people seemed accustomed to enjoying the deep night on the streets.
Franca had already integrated into such an environment, as if returning to her past life.
She was looking around quite comfortably when she suddenly noticed a human figure hanging on the outer wall of a building at the edge of an alley leading to an old neighborhood, gently swaying in a place where the street lamps couldn't illuminate.
With a Demoness's super vision and Night Vision, Franca instantly saw the appearance of that figure clearly:
Yellowish eyebrows, hair of the same color, a red headband wrapped around the forehead, deep blue eyes bulging out, frozen in pain and despair, not very deep facial features already distorted, mouth half-open, tongue sticking out.
Danitz!
Oracle Danitz!
He was hanging on the outer wall of the building, with a

brownish-yellow hemp rope around his neck!
He had been hanged.
The man who was distributing tutoring flyers to Lumian and the others just over an hour ago had been hanged!
As Franca's pupils suddenly dilated, Lumian and Jenna also noticed the corpse hanging in mid-air, gently swaying.
"The Oracle is dead? Murdered?" Jenna blurted out in confusion.
Who did this?
Was it a natural development of the dream, or was it done by that Celestial Worthy's subordinates?
After confirming that the corpse was indeed Oracle Danitz, Franca exhaled and said, "It's good that he's just a fake person in the dream, so the Oracle in reality won't die along with him."
Hearing these words, Lumian's heart stirred. He walked into the alley and came to the front of Danitz's suspended corpse.
During the process, he continuously observed his surroundings and took out a mirror to perform a quick and simple divination to confirm whether the murderer had already left and if anyone was paying attention to this place.
Before he got really close, he could already smell the stench of loss of bowel and bladder control.
Combined with other details, he determined that the Oracle had indeed been hanged to death.
Lumian condensed ice blocks on the wall to create protrusions, then nimbly climbed up to reach the same height as Danitz's corpse. He then put the Oracle, along with the hemp rope, into the mirror he had just used for divination.
"You want to bury the Oracle?" Franca asked curiously after Lumian jumped down from the wall, melted all the ice blocks, and dried the wet marks with crimson flames.
Lumian looked around and said in a lowered voice, "To conduct an experiment."
"What experiment?" Jenna, holding the depressed Ludwig's hand, asked curiously.
Lumian chuckled. "Based on the contents of the information and the details we've observed so far, we all know that this dream evolved from Mr. Fool's subconscious. If we hide the Oracle's corpse and don't let Mr. Fool discover or hear about such an incident, does that mean the Oracle's death doesn't exist, and tomorrow night, the Oracle will still be distributing flyers in that area with many night food stalls?"
"Come to think of it, it's really possible!" Franca quickly recalled the dream-themed movies and novels she had seen before her transmigration.

"If that's the case, we can find ways to use this point: major events that Mr. Fool's dream identity doesn't know about or hasn't heard of are equivalent to non-existent, never having happened!" Lumian said with a smile.
"But what if the Oracle doesn't appear tomorrow night, or if the police have obtained information about his disappearance?" Jenna knew Lumian wouldn't have overlooked this question, after all, there were only two possible outcomes for the experiment.
Lumian said with a smile on his lips, "There might be two reasons:
"First, each fake person in the dream, besides coming from Mr. Fool's memories and cognition, also has his subconscious integrated into them, so any event that happens in the dream will be known and recorded by Mr. Fool's subconscious."
Seeing that Franca and the others seemed unable to grasp the point he wanted to make, Lumian gave an example: "The information mentions that Mr. Fool was an ancient existence awakening from slumber, collecting power and secrets through his incarnation walking on earth, gradually reviving. His incarnation experienced the advancement from Sequence 2 Miracle Invoker to Sequence 1 Attendant of Mysteries. To prepare for the ritual, he established a town called Utopia, where every resident was Mr. Fool's marionette. Each marionette had its own destiny trajectory, all played by Mr. Fool, interacting with each other, portraying reality.
"Isn't this very similar to the current real dream? Except for the consciousness projections from the outside, the remaining dream fake people are likely Mr. Fool's subdivided subconscious, combined with the images from his memories to portray.
"In other words, except for us, every person and every animal in the dream might be Mr. Fool. If we really want to contact Mr. Fool, we might not need to find his dream identity. This could be one of our approaches to contact Mr. Fool in the future while bypassing the Celestial Worthy's monitoring."
"Was Utopia mentioned in that information?" Franca was stunned for a moment.
Did Mr. Fool use this term?
She raised her hand to rub her head, showing slight pain and confusion.
"It might have been there, but by the time I reached the later parts, I was already dazed. I seemed to be communicating with you, but I actually had no idea what I was saying..."
"It was indeed there, and the approach I just mentioned wasn't thought up by me either, it was proposed by the Major Arcana card holders, but they no longer have the chance to verify it." Lumian

nodded.
"Everyone is Mr. Fool..." Jenna recalled the sea of people they encountered after leaving the train carriage and the bustling scenes they had seen before, finding it hard to believe for a moment.
Lumian continued, "As for the second reason, if the Oracle's death was carried out by the Celestial Worthy's subordinates, that Celestial Worthy can also control and influence the dream, and would certainly let Mr. Fool's subconscious know about this incident. But the question is, what's the point of dealing with such a fake person?
"Even if they wanted to shake Mr. Fool's will by targeting his emotional weak points, they shouldn't have chosen the Oracle. From the information, the Oracle hasn't established any close relationship with Mr. Fool in the dream, not even qualifying as a friend."
"Strange," Franca murmured in agreement.
They quickly dealt with the scene using the Demoness's black flames, left the alley, and walked towards the old neighborhood where they were renting.
As they approached the main gate, they suddenly heard someone frantically calling out in a low voice from the side near some green trees, "Spare me, please spare me...
"Don't come any closer, don't come any closer!"
Lumian turned his gaze towards the source and saw that it was a local man, not someone with Northern Continent facial features like Oracle Danitz.

Chapter 908: Hospital

Seeing the local man curled up by the green trees, crying out in a near-breakdown state, Franca seriously considered whether to help call the police.

Lumian pondered for a few seconds, then gave Anthony a meaningful look.

Anthony immediately walked into the shadowed area and used Placate on the target.

The local man in his forties finally calmed down, as if emerging from a nightmare that had tormented him for a long time.

Lumian approached and asked pointedly, "What happened?"

Having encountered the strange death of Oracle Danitz not long ago and now meeting a mentally collapsed man, he intuitively felt this shouldn't be simple either, and might hide some crucial information.

The man raised his head and looked at Lumian and the others.

He was about to speak when he suddenly saw Franca and Jenna. His expression twisted and he cried out in extreme terror,

"Female ghost! A female ghost!"

His voice was exceptionally shrill, filled with fear, alerting even the security guard at the entrance of the old neighborhood, who came over with a flashlight to check.

Lumian quickly threw out his mirror, creating his own Mirror Maze.

Franca glanced at him, seeing that he had reacted in time, and withdrew her right hand from her pocket.

At the same time, Franca muttered to herself, "How do I look like a female ghost?

"How do Jenna and I look like female ghosts?"

The security guard, holding a brightly shining flashlight, came over and circled the green trees twice, saying with a puzzled face, "The sound was clearly coming from here, why can't I see anyone..."

He listened carefully again, feeling that the voice shouting "female ghost" had become somewhat distant, unable to discern exactly where it was coming from.

The security guard suddenly shuddered.

Could there really be female ghosts?

He decided not to deal with this matter anymore, only to help report it to the police.

As soon as he had this new idea, he immediately ran back towards the security room at the entrance.

Although the Mirror Maze was only at Sequence 7 level, the current

dark environment with few people still allowed Lumian to successfully deceive the security guard.
05:47
He had Franca and Jenna retreat to the edge of the Mirror Maze, not to be seen by the collapsed man, and signaled Anthony to do another round of Placate.
Although the Mirror Maze was only at Sequence 7 level, the current dark environment with few people still allowed Lumian to successfully deceive the security guard.
He had Franca and Jenna retreat to the edge of the Mirror Maze, not to be seen by the collapsed man, and signaled Anthony to do another round of Placate.
The mentally broken local man calmed down once again, and Anthony asked gently and calmly, "*What happened?* Perhaps I can help you."
For some reason, the man felt that Anthony before him was very trustworthy, making him feel very at ease. He took a breath and said, "I-I encountered a jiangshi!"
"A jiangshi?" Lumian could roughly understand this belonged to a type of undead creature, perhaps a unique term for zombies in this dream world.
The man was silent for a few seconds, looked at Anthony, and received an affirmative nod from him.
He gathered his courage and stammered, "I-I'm a hospital orderly, I just took a corpse to the morgue.
"That corpse was too beautiful, unbelievably beautiful. Her ears were a bit small, very cute, enchanting, just like those expensive jewelry in gold shops. She wasn't wearing any clothes, I couldn't resist, I told my coworker to go ahead, then I climbed on top, bit her ear, and had my way with her for quite a while."
Hearing this, Franca couldn't help but raise her right hand to face palm.
Bringing shame to the motherland!
Perverts are everywhere, it's about relative proportions!
"It didn't feel like a dead person at all..." the man rambled on, as if still savoring the experience.
Gradually, his eyes bulged. "Just as I pulled up my pants, she, that corpse's eyes opened!
"They opened!
"Female ghost! A female ghost!"
After listening intently, Lumian turned his head and said to Franca and Jenna, "If even a corpse has such great allure, could it be a Demoness?"
"It's possible." Franca nodded.

Jenna then proposed another possibility, "The corpse of a Sex Addict or a Baby Cupid might also have this effect."
She had a very deep impression of the Scrooge pathway.
Lumian looked outside the Mirror Maze, seeing no sign of police yet, so he had Anthony Placate the orderly once more, then used Dream Divination to draw a sketch.
The woman in the sketch was clearly not a local, more like someone from the Northern Continent, with striking features but a sacred aura, not feeling like a corpse at all.
Additionally, it was evident that the orderly had the strongest impression of the female corpse's small, delicate ears and long, beautiful neck, mixed with intense desire.
"She does look a bit like a Demoness," said Franca, standing at the edge of the Mirror Maze with rich experience in identifying Demonesses.
Lumian pondered for a moment, then asked the male orderly, "Which hospital do you work at?"
The male orderly didn't hide anything from Anthony,
"I live nearby, but I work at Mushu Hospital."
"Mushu Hospital..." Franca's eyelid twitched.
"What's wrong?" Lumian, Jenna, and Anthony didn't understand why Franca would react this way.
The hospital's name seemed normal, doesn't it mean gazing at the dawn in the distance?
Franca organized her thoughts and said, "This is one of the manifestations of you being able to understand the meaning of corresponding words, but not truly grasping what they symbolize.
"In my native language, 'Mushu' and 'Mother Tree' are near-homophones, and you should know very well what 'Mother Tree' represents."
Without waiting for Lumian and the others to respond, Franca said in a deep voice, "Mother Tree of Desire!"
"Can the Mother Tree of Desire also infiltrate its power into this dream a bit?" Lumian slightly furrowed his brow.
If the Mother Tree has appeared, how far away is the Mother?
Jenna obviously thought of this aspect too, and after a few seconds of silence, she said, "Then the possibility of it being a Baby Cupid corpse has increased..."
Lumian had Anthony further question the male orderly about any unusual occurrences at Mushu Hospital, but didn't get any useful answers.
They didn't waste any more time. Anthony used Hypnosis to make the male orderly forget about the recent soothing and questioning, and had him walk out of the Mirror Maze on his own, heading

towards another street.
Dispelling the Mirror Maze and watching the orderly's retreating figure, Lumian thoughtfully said, "That corpse definitely has issues, but it doesn't mean he doesn't have problems, nor does it mean everything else at Mushu Hospital is normal."
Jenna strongly agreed, "That intense desire to violate even a female corpse seems very much like the corruption of a Sex Addict.
"Of course, it could also be that he was enchanted by the female corpse to the point of losing control."
The group discussed the recent events as they walked into their rented apartment complex.
Franca suddenly sighed. "We've only been here half a day and already encountered two bizarre incidents not mentioned in the information, right?"
"Correct," Lumian confirmed.
He then smiled and said, "Perhaps this is how much weight the two Calamity pathways carry.
"When I switch back to the 'Hunter' pathway, I could almost be an incomplete human-shaped corpse wax candle. Maybe I could complete the corresponding secret deed rituals without relying on anything.
"Hmm, my spiritual intuition tells me that we might encounter that resurrected female corpse before long."
"Then we should take turns keeping watch starting tonight," Franca immediately said.
Dying in the dream could mean real death!
"It's indeed worth being so vigilant," Lumian nodded approvingly. "Tomorrow morning, we'll secretly observe outside Mr. Fool's company to recognize people first."
...
Late at night, in the master bedroom.
Jenna suddenly woke up and saw Franca hugging a thin blanket she had taken out of the Traveler's Bag, sitting against the headboard in the darkness, as if she had turned into a statue.
"What are you thinking about?" Jenna slowly sat up and asked carefully.
Franca gazed at the wall opposite, which had been "painted" by darkness, and answered in a voice like sleep-talking, "Why would Mr. Fool name his marionette town Utopia..."
"Is there something wrong with this name?" Jenna didn't quite understand what Franca was concerned about.
After a few seconds of silence, Franca said, "That's a term specific to the world I transmigrated from, meaning a non-existent country, an imaginary country... Why would Mr. Fool use it..."

Jenna roughly understood Franca's thoughts. She said in a gentle voice, "The Major Arcana card holders mentioned in the information that Mr. Fool has been collecting Emperor Roselle's diaries. Maybe this term was in one of the diaries, or maybe Mr. Fool learned about this term during his long-term confrontation with the Celestial Worthy. Or, well, didn't you say the Ancient Sun God might also be a transmigrator? Why couldn't Mr. Fool be one?"
"That's what I'm suspecting. The more I think about Mr. Fool's origins mentioned in the information and the experiences of his avatars, the more I suspect..." Franca's voice became so low it lost its weight.
"Don't suspect, verify," Jenna comforted Franca in her own way. "When we awaken Mr. Fool, you can ask this question. Whether he's a transmigrator or not, after confronting the Celestial Worthy for so many years, he must know the secret of your transmigration. He might even be able to help you return. For now, don't think too much about it, focus on awakening Mr. Fool."
Franca slowly exhaled and said, "Right, thinking too much now is useless, we can't verify anything for the time being.
"Hmm... For me, awakening Mr. Fool is no longer just a task from the Tarot Club, no longer just something that must be done to survive the apocalypse..."
After chatting for a while longer, Franca lay back down, inhaling Jenna's scent, and fell into a deep sleep, both mentally and physically exhausted.
After Franca was completely asleep, Jenna carefully got up, opened the master bedroom door, and walked into the living room that doubled as a dining room.
Lumian, wearing a white shirt and black trousers, was sitting by the wooden dining table, staring blankly at the window in the direction of the shoe cabinet.
"It's my turn to keep watch, you can go rest now," Jenna said with a smile.
Lumian withdrew his gaze and stood up.
"What were you and Franca talking about just now?"
Jenna summarized the key points of Franca's doubts and her own comfort. Lumian nodded slightly and said, "Right, give her a goal, motivate her to act, and not think too much for now.
"When it's daylight, I'll find a chance to consult Anthony again to see if we need to do anything else."
Jenna turned her gaze to the window in the direction of the shoe cabinet and asked curiously, "What were you thinking about just now?"
Lumian looked in that direction as well. What met his eyes was

the scene inside the neighborhood. At this moment, only two or three households in each building still had light spilling out, while the rest were in darkness.

Lumian's thoughts seemed to drift away again. He answered in a low voice, "I was wondering if Aurore used to live in a city like this..."

Chapter 909: Case Investigation

The next morning.

After cleaning up in the master bedroom bathroom, Franca walked into the living room and immediately saw plastic bags piled on the wooden dining table. Those semi-transparent white plastic bags contained various foods like fried dough sticks, sesame balls, steamed dumplings, xiaolongbao, and regular steamed buns. Next to them were cups of soy milk and bottles of milk.

The aroma permeating the air felt both familiar and tempting to Franca. She blurted out in surprise, "Who bought all this?"

Don't you need me as a guide to help with communication anymore?

Is this really a "foreigner" who's been here for less than 24 hours?

Lumian smiled and pointed to himself. "Of course it was me."

Franca looked him up and down. "You bought so much breakfast at once, didn't the shopkeeper find it strange?"

"It's not like I bought them all from one place," Lumian said, glancing at Ludwig who had bitten off half a sesame ball, revealing some of the red bean paste filling inside. He smiled and continued, "Later, one shopkeeper did ask when he saw me carrying so much food."

"How did you answer?" Franca asked vigilantly.

Lumian chuckled. "I said I was doing multi-level marketing."

"..." Franca's mouth gaped slightly, at a loss for words.

"The shopkeeper had the same reaction, then asked if I was joking." Lumian maintained his smile. "I said yes, I was actually preparing breakfast for a company team-building event."

"Where did you learn these terms?" Franca asked, looking slightly bewildered.

Lumian chuckled in response. "Aurore mentioned them before, and I asked about them, but I still didn't understand what they meant. Last night I finally figured it out online."

"Your learning ability is quite amazing..." Franca said, her lip twitching slightly.

He's already surfing the internet so quickly!

Good thing this guy hasn't learned to use food delivery apps to order breakfast directly yet, otherwise what use would I be as a guide?

Lumian said in an Aurore-like smug tone, "I've already applied for a QQ number and a backup WeChat account. Once we finish the observation phase of our work, I'll try adding Mr. Fool."

14:37

"..." Franca thought about how this guy was now essentially a

genuine beauty who could switch to a beautiful female form at any time. She couldn't help but quip, "Mr. Fool will think you're selling tea leaves and won't add you at all."
Lumian said in an Aurore-like smug tone, "I've already applied for a QQ number and a backup WeChat account. Once we finish the observation phase of our work, I'll try adding Mr. Fool."
"..." Franca thought about how this guy was now essentially a genuine beauty who could switch to a beautiful female form at any time. She couldn't help but quip, "Mr. Fool will think you're selling tea leaves and won't add you at all."
"What?" Lumian was a bit confused.
Finally something you don't know! Franca pulled out a chair and sat down, then tore open the soy milk seal, broke off half a dough stick, and dropped it in to soak.
After doing this, she began "educating" Lumian and Anthony, who was silently eating breakfast, on some Internet common sense—Jenna had taken the second half of the night watch and was still catching up on sleep.
Towards the end, Franca pondered for a moment and said to Lumian, "Although you're adapting and integrating very well, I still don't think you should have made that kind of joke when buying breakfast. That kind of joke leaves a strong impression, and you're quite handsome now, so the breakfast shop owner has definitely remembered you. This isn't very conducive to our current plan of hiding our identities and observing quietly."
"If we weren't concerned about this, afraid of becoming too famous and attracting the Celestial Worthy's attention, we could even start a livestream to make money, and take Ludwig to eat at buffets!"
Lumian thought about it seriously, "Indeed, I'll be more careful. We'll have Anthony go buy things from now on."
At this point, Lumian sincerely praised Franca, "You're even more attentive than me when it comes to these things."
Franca used chopsticks to pick up a section of dough sticks soaked in sweet soy milk, stuffed it in her mouth, chewed and swallowed, then half-closed her eyes and sighed with both intoxication and satisfaction. "This is it..."
She paused, then said proudly, "Of course, I've seriously acted as an Assassin before. I'm definitely not the kind of assassin who thinks 'killing everyone who sees me equals successful stealth'!"
They chatted idly for a while, and Jenna also got up and started eating the breakfast Lumian had put in the Traveler's Bag earlier, which Ludwig hadn't discovered.
Just then, there was a knock at the door.
Lumian and Franca went to open the door one after the other, and

saw two people in police uniforms standing outside. The leader had a receding hairline and gray eyes, while the one behind him had black hair and green eyes, looking very handsome but with a lazy, carefree air about him.
Franca's pupils suddenly dilated.
She recognized the young police officer with emerald eyes.
It was the Major Arcana card holder, Mr. Star!
Franca was about to greet him happily when she suddenly realized.
Mr. Star had been locked onto by the Celestial Worthy and would be kicked out shortly after entering the dream each time. The one before her should only be the dream image of Mr. Star woven by Mr. Fool's subconscious.
"Good morning, my name is Deng, I'm the police officer responsible for this area," the gray-eyed policeman smiled and asked. "You just moved in yesterday, right?"
"Yes," Lumian didn't hide it.
The police here even know we just arrived yesterday?
The police in Trier were never this efficient...
Officer Deng said amiably, "Do you have a temporary residence permit..."
"Captain, it's called a residence permit now," the young police officer behind him with black hair and green eyes, who was suspected to be the dream image of the Major Arcana card holder, Mr. Star, reminded him helplessly.
He seemed to have reminded him many times before.
"Haha, I forgot, I forgot." Officer Deng laughed self-deprecatingly.
"We haven't had time to get one yet," Franca quickly answered, afraid that Lumian wouldn't know what a residence permit was.
"Then when you have time, go to the police station across from New City Garden to get one. If you young lovers get married later and have children, you'll need this to enroll them in public kindergartens," Officer Deng reminded them in a casual manner.
Fast-forwarding to marriage and children already... Franca found it both amusing and helpless.
"Captain..." Mr. Star behind Officer Deng reminded him once again.
Officer Deng smiled."I almost forgot, we came to ask you something today. Call all your friends over."
When Jenna came to the entrance area holding Ludwig's hand, along with Anthony, Officer Deng took out a photo. "Have you seen this person?"
The man in the photo had dyed his hair and eyebrows a burnt yellow color, with unremarkable facial features. It was clearly Oracle Danitz.

"We've seen him," Lumian answered, pretending to think. "He handed out fliers to us last night. What was his name again?"
He turned his gaze to Jenna.
Jenna, holding Ludwig's hand, said, "His surname was Da, I don't remember his full name. He wanted to recommend a suitable tutoring class for children. I was planning to go check it out when I have time."
Seeing Lumian and Jenna speaking like an old married couple with a child, Officer Deng's gaze swept back and forth between the two of them, and between Lumian and Franca.
Young people these days...
"Did something happen to him?" Lumian asked curiously, taking the initiative.
Officer Deng explained briefly, "He didn't return to his residence last night. His roommate reported him missing, and we're investigating everyone he had contact with last night."
Franca and Jenna resisted the urge to look at Lumian, while Lumian spoke the truest words, "He gave us fliers, chatted for a bit, then left."
Officer Deng and Mr. Star asked a few more details and made notes.
After they left and everyone sat back at the dining table, Franca looked at Lumian and asked with concern, "Is the Oracle's body still in that mirror?"
Lumian took out the corresponding mirror and checked. "It's still there."
There was still a mirror world here, and Lumian could still freely enter and exit, but he could now directly narrow the range of different mirrors to within 500 meters. For mirrors he had already mastered locating, the distance between them couldn't exceed ten kilometers when wanting to traverse, otherwise there was a risk of getting lost in the void tunnel.
Jenna nodded. "Then we can rule out the first guess from yesterday.
"Critical things that Mr. Fool's dream identity doesn't know about or hasn't heard of will also become real and evolve further."
The remaining two guesses were that all the NPCs in the dream had part of Mr. Fool's subconscious integrated into them, and that the Oracle's death was done by the Celestial Worthy's subordinates. These two were not completely opposed and could both be true.
Lumian offered a curt acknowledgment. "If it was done by the Celestial Worthy's subordinates, the disappearance of the body would puzzle them as well. Besides the police, there should be people investigating the Oracle's whereabouts, we need to be

careful."
After discussing this for a while, Lumian looked at the long-stopped wall clock, then at the sky outside.
"It seems to be getting late."
Franca took out her phone, lit up the screen, looked at it and said, "It's time to go out, Mr. Fool should be heading to the company soon."
Lumian thought for a moment and said to Franca, "I'm worried we'll encounter Amon again if we take a taxi. Last night I found out online that there's also the option of renting a car. Although it will cost more, it's safer and more discreet.
"Do you know how to drive?"
"I have a driver's license," Franca blinked and said, "The identity documents provided by Madam Justice also include a driver's license."
"I'm asking if you know how to drive," Lumian emphasized, amused.
Franca flew into a rage out of humiliation. "I got my license in college, but before I graduated, uh, I came to Intis. Where would I have had a car to drive?
"If you ask me if I know how to drive, I can only answer that I have a license."
She felt that Anthony, who was currently experiencing the dream world, should have already guessed that she came from a different world.
Before Lumian could ask again, she said confidently, "With a Beyonder's eyesight, hearing, reaction time, and physical coordination, plus my driving knowledge, I don't think driving will be a problem. Didn't you quickly master how to use chopsticks yesterday?"
"Then let's rent a car." Lumian made the decision.
Although Franca felt the pain of spending money, thinking that she could borrow more, she suppressed that feeling.
By the due date, we might have completed the mission and left the dream!
...
In a temporary parking spot across from a large building.
Sitting in a gray sedan, Lumian and the others intently observed the white-collar workers entering the building, some hurried and some leisurely, through the tinted car windows.

Chapter 910: First Encounter

When it came to observation, although Lumian was already a demigod, all his abilities were suppressed to the Sequence 7 level. He felt he wasn't as professional as a Spectator, so he gave the back seat position closest to the target building to Anthony. Lumian relied on his eagle-like vision from the Demoness pathway and a Hunter's sensitivity to visual clues to observe from afar.

In the front seat, Franca had finally managed to complete her parallel parking. She rested her elbow on the car door, watching the target area while secretly feeling proud. Jenna turned around, leaning forward and squeezing her head above Franca's shoulder, also watching intently.

As time passed minute by minute, Franca suddenly smelled the aroma of meat stewed with spices until tender.

She turned her head and saw Ludwig quietly munching on a meat sandwich in the far corner of the back seat.

"It hasn't been two hours since breakfast, right?" Franca blurted out.

Why is he eating again?

Lumian simply replied, "No, it hasn't."

"I'm thinking, is this his eating frequency and portion size in reality too..." Franca muttered.

She didn't have a direct understanding of how much Ludwig could eat before, only a financial concept. But in the days before entering the dream, she often helped Jenna supervise Ludwig's homework and test papers. The two Demonesses got to witness what it meant to be a Glutton, leaving an extremely deep impression.

Franca continued, "In the dream, aren't all special abilities limited to Sequence 7 level? But he doesn't seem to be eating any less..."

Hearing this, Lumian, Jenna, and Anthony's gazes suddenly turned to Ludwig.

Ludwig quickly stuffed the entire meat sandwich in his mouth and mumbled, "Because it's delicious!"

"You'd rather be stuffed than not eat?" Lumian raised an eyebrow.

"Mmhmm." Ludwig nodded vigorously.

Seeing Ludwig like this, Jenna couldn't help but laugh.

"It is really delicious."

Lumian thought for a moment and decided to indulge Ludwig for a couple of days, as he himself was eating more than usual.

"It's really good, isn't it?" Franca became proud again, "What I can't figure out is how none of you got diarrhea. Jenna and Anthony were even clamoring that it was spicy while eating!"

"My digestive system has endured the burning of flames, and

Ascetic has strong resistance to extreme environments." Lumian indicated that spiciness was no trouble for a Hunter who liked self-harm like him.
"Swallowing a ball of fire" was an exaggeration for others, but for him it was an occasional objective description.
Anthony continued observing the entrance and exit of the building, calmly saying, "The Mythical Creature form of Spectator is a mind dragon."
Although there wasn't much improvement in combat abilities, one's physical toughness would significantly increase.
Just as Jenna was about to describe her feelings, Anthony and Lumian said in unison, "Mr. Fool is here."
Jenna hurriedly returned to her previous posture, turning her gaze to the dark-tinted car window.
She saw a young man wearing a black short-sleeved polo shirt, light-colored casual pants, and a pair of brownish sneakers. He was holding a cup of soy milk and carrying a bag of steamed buns, taking a few steps up the stairs towards the building.
This man had short black hair that was simply styled, deep brown eyes behind a pair of non-prescription glasses. His face was much thinner compared to the portrait in their files, with soft contours, giving him a somewhat handsome appearance.
He was precisely Lumian and the others' target, the dream image of Mr. Fool, Zhou Mingrui!
After Zhou Mingrui's figure disappeared into the building lobby, Franca took a breath and said, "Compared to the original sketch, Mr. Fool has lost quite a bit of weight and become a little better looking...
"Could the Major Arcana card holders' speculation be correct, that he was somehow misled by the Celestial Worthy into drinking the Assassin potion?
"Is the Celestial Worthy trying to use gender change to cause cognitive issues for Mr. Fool and thereby achieve victory?"
The Major Arcana card holders mentioned in the files that one of the most important phase goals for Lumian's team was to prevent Zhou Mingrui, who was suspected to have drunk the Assassin potion, from truly becoming a Witch!
"Does the Assassin potion also improve appearance?" Lumian asked Franca and Jenna.
He had switched from the Hunter pathway to the Demoness pathway and hadn't experienced the Assassin sequence in detail.
"It mainly adjusts body shape to make the user more suitable as an assassin, which brings about a slight change in appearance, but very little," Franca recalled. "Mr. Fool, uh, Zhou Mingrui probably

succeeded in passive weight loss, becoming better looking mainly due to slimming down, and secondarily due to the minor improvements from the Assassin potion."
She felt it was better to refer to the target as Zhou Mingrui for now. Constantly using "Mr. Fool" made her nervous and afraid to discuss.
Lumian nodded and asked Anthony, "Did you notice anything?"
Anthony said, "Mr. Fool's steps up the stairs were very light, consistent with the description of the Assassin potion...
"Mr. Fool is wearing non-prescription glasses to conceal eyes that are no longer nearsighted, indicating he doesn't want to change his life in the short term and will continue working...
"Mr. Fool's emotional state seems good, he probably hasn't encountered any major incidents yet...
"Can't tell if he's taken the Instigator potion yet..."
After hearing Anthony's observations, Lumian thoughtfully said, "Continue observing and recording the people mentioned in our files and those showing certain abnormalities..."
"Okay," Jenna responded first, then pointed across the street. "That's Rozanne, in reality she's a civilian staff member of the Church of Evernight, married with children. In the dream, she's Zhou Mingrui's colleague. Currently uncertain if there's anything abnormal..."
Franca followed up, "That one wearing a white tailcoat with a bowtie and long silver hair in 30-degree heat is Vice President Wu from the company next to Zhou Mingrui's, suspected to be..."
At this point, Franca glanced sideways at Lumian and saw that his expression remained calm, his gaze not changing much.
Only then did she continue, "Suspected to be Ouroboros, the Angel of Fate of the Aurora Order, a king from ancient times."
According to their files, the company next to Mr. Fool's should be a projection of the Aurora Order in the dream.
Until 10 a.m., Lumian and the others finished their first round of observation, matching many people with the information in their files, but not discovering any truly suspicious individuals.
"Roselle Emperor, uh, CEO Huang didn't come," Franca said with some disappointment.
Roselle Emperor's image in the dream was the CEO of the Intis Group where Mr. Fool worked, a business tycoon, a domineering boss.
Before Lumian could respond, Franca chuckled to herself. "He's probably still in bed with some actress, streamer, or singer."
Lumian was also a bit disappointed, but there would be plenty of opportunities in the future.

He, who had never attended university, was already preparing to apply for a security guard position at the Intis Group.
"Now let's go buy clothes," Lumian said, looking down at his still normal shirt and trousers, then glancing at Jenna's blue waist-cinching long dress with classical charm.
At this point, Ludwig raised a question, "What's for lunch?"
Franca, currently responsible for the entire team's income, immediately said, "Who eats out every day?
"Later we'll go to a large supermarket and buy dozens of kilos of noodles and some side dishes. I'll cook noodles for you, all you can eat!"
As soon as she finished speaking, Franca saw the smile and anticipation disappear from Ludwig's face, replaced by a slightly aggrieved expression.
She felt no pity or guilt, but instead secretly patted her thigh.
Damn, I should have let Jenna say those two sentences! What a great opportunity to digest the Affliction potion!
After finalizing their itinerary, Franca carefully drove the car out onto the wide road.
...
Inside a large shopping mall.
Lumian and the others, with their appearance completely transformed, took the elevator from the underground parking lot to the first floor.
Franca looked at Jenna again, feeling that the simple combination of a white patterned T-shirt, light blue jeans, white sneakers, and ankle-length socks of the same color gave her a fresh and clean look. It retained a youthful, student-like air while adding a hint of natural allure in her glances, attracting the gaze of many passersby.
It's the type I used to like, no, still like! And Jenna with heavy makeup is another style altogether... Franca didn't hide her admiration.
Her tall stature and striking features made the ordinary black T-shirt and wide-leg pants look mature and confident, causing many people to only dare steal quick glances.
Lumian still wore a shirt with black pants, but with a more casual and relaxed feel. Walking together with the two Demonesses, they looked as beautiful as a painting.
Their clothes were all very cheap. Franca had given up on the bulk-priced ones and opted for the 10-yuan items, buying a lot.
Lumian's gaze swept every corner of the mall, feeling it was spacious, bright, and clean, even more impressive than the most luxurious department store in Trier.

Franca had no intention of letting Lumian, Jenna, Anthony, and Ludwig wander around here. She headed straight for the escalator going down to the basement, planning to enter the supermarket.
Money needs to be saved!
As soon as Lumian, Jenna, and Anthony arrived at the entrance of the supermarket, they were dazzled by the wide array of goods inside, the artistic displays, and the soft yet bright lighting.
Franca suddenly paused, instinctively turning her head towards Ludwig. She found the little boy's gaze already fixed, his eyes filled with burning desire.
"Let's go back!" Franca blurted out. "I'll buy the stuff online and have it delivered!"
In a place like a supermarket, kids simply can't control themselves!
Hearing Franca's words, Ludwig's expression immediately fell.
After learning the reason, Lumian and Jenna both agreed with Franca's decision.
Turning around and walking a few steps, Lumian's peripheral vision suddenly caught a figure.
The figure had their head slightly lowered, black hair hanging down, faintly revealing small and delicate ears.
She quickly disappeared into the depths of the supermarket.
Lumian suddenly stopped and said in a low voice to Franca, Jenna, and Anthony, "I may have seen that reanimated female corpse."

Chapter 911: A Way to Make Money

Reanimated female corpse? Franca and the others were all startled.

Last night, Lumian had said he intuitively believed that before long, they would encounter that reanimated female corpse. As a result, they ran into her today?

"Where?" Jenna asked in a lowered voice.

Lumian looked towards the escalator without showing any outward sign of abnormality. "In the supermarket."

He didn't immediately turn around to track the reanimated female corpse, because Franca casually glanced at a corner of the ceiling, then carelessly looked around.

The first action was to remind Lumian that there were multiple cameras here, while the latter behavior implied that there were many people around, many phones, and if he were to cause any commotion, it would likely be filmed as a short video, uploaded online, and become a trending topic. If that happened, it would likely catch the Celestial Worthy's attention!

Although Lumian could use Mirror Maze and other illusions to affect cameras and phones, this wasn't a scenario he had preset. He would have to chase all the way, and couldn't use mirror magic every few steps.

It was only because they lived in a rather dilapidated area of the old town that there were quite a few cameras on the main roads and at the entrances of various residential areas. Once in quiet alleys that few people usually walked, there wasn't much surveillance. Otherwise, Lumian's act of moving Oracle Danitz's corpse would have been recorded long ago. Franca would certainly have stopped him first at that time, telling him to find a blind spot in the surveillance to take out the mirror, create a Mirror Maze step by step before approaching the corpse.

Hearing his godfather's answer that the reanimated female corpse was in the supermarket, Ludwig's eyes lit up, and he raised his short arm. "Let's go chase her!"

Kid, you have gotten a bit smarter, even knowing how to take advantage of this situation! I can't tell if you want to use this as an excuse to go into the supermarket to get food, or if you think that female corpse might be more delicious... Franca silently grumbled, turning her gaze to Jenna.

Jenna intuitively understood Franca's hint and said with a smile, "We can't track with so many people. Anthony and I will take Ludwig back to the car first. You and Lumian go into the supermarket to find her."

The expression of expectation and desire on Ludwig's face suddenly froze.
"Alright." Franca took out the car keys and tossed them to Jenna.
"I also want to contribute to the team..." Ludwig hadn't finished speaking before being dragged away by Jenna, disappointment and pain evident in his expression.
Franca quickly turned around, grabbed a shopping cart from nearby, and pushed it towards the supermarket. Lumian followed beside her, his gaze naturally sweeping over the displays and rows of shelves.
While searching for traces of the reanimated female corpse, Franca began picking out items.
"Grab that can of lard, and get some light soy sauce, dark soy sauce, salt, MSG, chili oil..." She ordered Lumian around without hesitation, while also constantly putting some kitchen items into the shopping cart herself.
Although cooking at home wastes time, it saves a lot of money!
Later they could go to the frozen goods wholesale market to buy some cheap items. The only problem was that the refrigerator in the rental apartment was too small, unable to hold more than a few days' worth of food.
So you can buy things this way... Lumian experienced for the first time the joy of picking up goods himself without needing to find a salesperson. He interestedly placed a bottle of alcohol into the shopping cart.
"This is cooking wine! Well, we need it anyway." Franca glanced amusedly at this regular customer of Ol' Tavern.
The two chatted and laughed, moving through the supermarket in a harmonious atmosphere, no different from other families shopping around them.
Under this disguise, Lumian and Franca confirmed the situation in every corner of the supermarket, but found no trace of the reanimated female corpse.
"She may have already left. Let's check out first." Franca looked at the dozens of pounds of freshly made noodles and a ten-kilogram bag of rice on top of the shopping cart, genuinely delighted at how much money they could save on meals in the coming days.
Lumian nodded. "We'll take turns cooking later."
Franca patted Lumian's shoulder with a smile. "I'm looking forward to your culinary skills."
This trip, the two bought nearly 500 yuan worth of goods, most of which were inexpensive ingredients that could fill stomachs.
After leaving the supermarket exit, Lumian and Franca quickly scanned around but still didn't see any sign of the reanimated

female corpse.
Almost simultaneously, Franca noticed a shop with the words "Lottery" written on it.
Her heart suddenly stirred, and she turned her head to look at Lumian, asking with full expectation, "Can you still use your abilities to Magnified Fate and Compelling Fate?"
"Of course." Lumian cast his gaze towards the shop Franca had just been looking at. "But only at the Sequence 7 level. I can't influence relatively crucial and important fates unless their probability of occurrence is already very high."
A smile gradually blossomed on Franca's face, attracting the gazes of several passersby, both men and women.
"Let's go buy some lottery tickets!" She said with a firm tone, concealing her joy.
Is she wanting me to magnify the fate stream of her winning, or forcibly compel fate in that direction? Lumian had long known what lottery meant. In the past, Aurore would occasionally give him gifts in the form of lottery tickets on major holidays, with a 100% win rate.
"Let's give it a try." Lumian's subtext was to buy a small amount first, and even if Compelling Fate was ineffective in Mr. Fool's dream, they wouldn't lose too much.
Franca rubbed her hands together and walked towards the lottery booth with a bright and clear smile.
Before transmigrating, she would buy ten to twenty yuan worth of lottery tickets every week or two, purely for entertainment, but never had returns exceeding the principal.
Now, I've come with good luck!
She didn't directly buy lottery tickets like the Double Color Ball, but instead spent fifty yuan on different versions of scratch cards.
As she paid and made her selections, Lumian's eyes took on a silver-white color with black.
He reached out to Franca, embracing her shoulders in a couple-like gesture, using this to complete his touch on the River of Fate.
The corresponding stream was magnified.
Franca instinctively twisted her body, not quite comfortable with such an embrace, especially in public.
But she quickly returned to a normal state, allowing Lumian to embrace her shoulders.
Her eyes had already lit up.
She scratched off the corresponding numbers!
This is worth 50 yuan!
While Lumian was paying attention to the various grand prize information being announced at the lottery booth, Franca finished

scratching all the lottery tickets, winning a total of two thousand.
"Haha!" She laughed silently and smugly.
Finally made a profit!
Beyonder powers are great!
After cashing in the prizes, Franca said to Lumian in an exceptionally cheerful mood, "I'm going to buy a few Double Color Ball tickets."
At this point, she lowered her voice, "Don't worry about those fate streams for the grand prize, a third or second prize would be fine."
Lumian nodded gently.
Franca immediately thought of some numbers and bought 5 entries.
As they walked towards the nearest direct elevator, Lumian asked Franca with a smile, "Why don't you want to win the first prize? I see the first prize money is worth a lot, and you could even win dozens at once."
Franca wrinkled her nose and said, "Didn't you say that currently you can only influence fates that aren't too crucial or important? That kind of overnight wealth probably can't be achieved.
"Besides, even if you could really make me win, the final result might not be what I bought. 'Fate' has long been predetermined."
After complaining a bit, Franca asked with concern, "Did Magnified Fate just now succeed?"
Lumian chuckled. "No."
"...My money!" Franca blurted out, then immediately comforted herself, "Good thing it wasn't much."
Lumian explained simply, "I only realized this wasn't an instant-win lottery when you were buying. The results won't come out for several days. The corresponding fate streams are complex and intricate, with too many variables. I couldn't clearly see which one led to the winning fate, I could only magnify the one with special characteristics. What the final result will be, I don't know either.
"We can only pray for Mr. Fool's blessing." Franca expressed understanding.
Seeing that the direct elevator was about to arrive, Lumian looked left and right and asked thoughtfully,
"We're under surveillance, so that reanimated female corpse should be too.
"Is there any way to check the mall's surveillance footage to see what she came here to do?"
"We're not the police; we don't have that authority." Franca instinctively replied.
"Sneak in at night and look through it ourselves?" Lumian suggested.

Franca said with amusement, "The Major Arcana card holders told us to obey the law as much as possible. Why do you always want to dance on the edge of breaking the law?"
"It's fine if we don't get caught." Lumian said with a smile, "We can't just report it to the police and let them investigate, can we? Wouldn't that turn it back into a confrontation between Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy? We need to use the police, not rely on them."
Franca thought for a few seconds and said, "We'll see how it goes tonight."
...
In the rented apartment on the sixth floor.
Franca looked at Ludwig, his head buried in a large bowl, chopsticks constantly moving, and proudly boasted to Lumian and the others, "My cooking skills aren't bad, right?"
This child is quite easy to feed. Noodles, seasonings, and a topping with a bit of minced meat satisfied him. He doesn't have to go out to eat good food!
"It's quite good, but I hope you're not only capable of making noodles." Lumian took a sip of the noodle soup and put down his chopsticks.
"I also hope your culinary skills are as good as you say." Franca responded with a smile.
Just as Lumian was about to say something, his expression suddenly changed slightly.
He quickly took out a mirror from his pocket, the mirror that contained Oracle Danitz's corpse!
At this moment, a pale hand without luster was reflected on the surface of the mirror.
This hand was reaching out from the darkness towards the outside of the mirror.
Black flames restraining madness and violence immediately condensed on both sides of Lumian. They fell onto that mirror like meteors.
With a slight explosive sound, the mirror suddenly shattered into pieces, enveloped by the black flames, rapidly losing its limited spirituality.
Crackling sounds continued to ring out as the mirror fragments fell to the ground, breaking into even smaller pieces.
The pale hand was no longer visible on the surface of these fragments.
"Has the Oracle's corpse reanimated?" Jenna looked at this scene and asked in astonishment.

Chapter 912: Tracking

Lumian looked at the dull, dark mirror fragments on the ground, relying on his spiritual perception for a few seconds before saying, "There's a problem with the Oracle's corpse, but I don't know why."

Franca asked uncertainly, "Now that the mirror is broken, has the Oracle's corpse fallen into the depths of the mirror world, lost in its turbulent flows?"

Each mirror had a corresponding area behind it. They were connected by illusory, dark tunnels, forming the mirror world.

Once a mirror broke, the corresponding area behind it immediately disintegrated. If things placed there couldn't escape in time through the spider web-like tunnels, they would be swallowed by the turbulent flows of the mirror world and dragged into its depths. The environment and hidden dangers there were fatal to Beyonders without a complete Mythical Creature form.

When a mirror broke, it essentially formed more but smaller mirrors. However, from a mystical concept, it had been destroyed as a whole, completely losing its original symbolism and function. The new mirrors produced needed time to evolve their own areas behind them, connect with the vast mirror world, and become mirrors with complete concepts in mysticism.

In other words, for a period of time, these mirror fragments could not be used to reflect enemies, transmit curses, or traverse the mirror world, though this doesn't affect Wraiths using them for mirror jumps.

Of course, Lumian just destroyed the mirror with the Fire of Destruction, so the fragments formed had been completely destroyed in a mystical sense and could not evolve areas behind them. This prevented potential enemies from locating and pinpointing Lumian and the others' specific location.

Lumian carefully said, "The Oracle's corpse has indeed been carried away by the spatial turbulence of the mirror world. Even Angels would find it difficult to delve deep into the mirror world to find and bring it out, unless they're angels of the Door pathway like Madam Magician or Demoness Angels with deep mastery of the mirror world.

"But doesn't this mean the Oracle's corpse will drift in the depths of the mirror world forever until it's completely torn apart and annihilated by the dangers there. There's a chance that after some time, it could be thrown out of the mirror world by spatial turbulence, emerging from a random mirror."

"Mr. Fool's dream world is mainly this city. If the Oracle's corpse comes out of a mirror, do we have a way to find it and confirm

what problem it had?" Jenna understood what Lumian wanted to express.
Lumian smiled. "Yes. Let's wait patiently for now, until spiritual intuition gives us a hint."
The corpse of Oracle Danitz was hidden by him and had a close mystical connection with him.
Franca nodded, took out her phone, and started browsing trending topics, sometimes laughing out loud and sharing the joy with Lumian, Jenna, and Anthony, sometimes discussing with them whether certain news items had symbolic meaning in the dream or were related to Mr. Fool's current state.
By the time Ludwig had finished his sixth bowl of noodles and was also looking at his phone, Lumian, who occasionally showed a smile, raised his head and said in a deep voice, "The Oracle's corpse should have left the mirror world."
"Hmm, quickly use Magic Mirror Divination to confirm its specific location." Franca took out a mirror.
Lumian shook his head and chuckled softly. "There's no need to go through so much trouble."
He turned his gaze towards Ludwig.
Ludwig put his right hand in his mouth, retched a few times, and vomited out a small clump of yellowish hair.
"We can directly determine the location using the Oracle's hair with follicles," Lumian explained.
"When did you take a clump of hair from the corpse and hide it in Ludwig's stomach?" Franca asked in astonishment.
Lumian responded with a smile, "Last night before bed, when Anthony was on night watch.
"The Oracle died so suddenly and bizarrely, of course I had to guard against his corpse reanimating. Hiding some of his hair in Ludwig's body can counter divination and prophecy."
Saying this, Lumian held the small clump of slightly damp yellowish hair and stood up, saying, "Let's go."
Almost simultaneously, he burned part of the hair and smeared the residue onto the surface of a mirror.
As the residue seeped in, the mirror emanated a dark, watery light, reflecting a scene.
There were oil-stained walls, a very spacious area, a floor covered in dust and rat droppings, quite dirty large glass windows, and Oracle Danitz's corpse lying on the ground in front of a glass pane.
"Looks like an abandoned factory, the machines have been moved away..." Franca commented after a glance.
"In the suburbs, less than ten kilometers from us," Lumian added more information.

"Teleport over?" Jenna asked.
Lumian could rely on Mirror Traversal to directly go to another mirror within ten kilometers that he had located, and he had now locked onto the glass window that had ejected the Oracle's corpse—even without knowing the position, he could sense mirrors within 500 meters and jump to them in segments.
Moreover, his Teleportation could still be used, but was restricted to positioning within one kilometer; beyond that, he needed to have been there before or have correct coordinates, with the farthest reach being the edge of the dream world.
Lumian nodded slightly, letting his teammates grab onto him, and took them into the mirror Franca had placed on the table.
Passing through a dark, illusory tunnel, they suddenly plunged into the depths of the mirror world, falling towards the glass window they had located.
Amidst Anthony's dizziness, the five figures simultaneously appeared on the dirty glass of the abandoned factory.
Lumian didn't linger, quickly sensing other mirrors within a 500-meter range and jumping over.
They appeared on the top floor of the office building beside the abandoned factory, left the glass window serving as a mirror, each hiding themselves, and gazed towards the target location.
From this angle, they could just see Oracle Danitz's corpse.
"Don't chew, just hold it in your mouth," Lumian handed a lollipop to Ludwig to keep him quiet.
Franca and Jenna were already carefully examining the Oracle's corpse, finding that because it had been hidden in the mirror world, there were no signs of decay yet. But whether it was the bloodless face, the eyes frozen in fear, or other details, all indicated that the Oracle had been dead for over ten hours.
"Nothing unusual..." Franca muttered silently.
Lumian remained motionless, patiently observing.
After nearly five minutes, in their line of sight, the Oracle's corpse's fingers suddenly twitched.
Dammit, amazing, back from the dead? Franca instinctively "admired" in her heart while being startled.
The corpse of Oracle Danitz first moved its fingers, then raised its arm.
Finally, it slowly stood up, its expression wooden, its deep blue eyes no longer overflowing with any emotion.
Really reanimated? Goosebumps rose on Jenna's arms.
The reanimated Danitz corpse walked towards the outside of the abandoned factory, neither fast nor slow.
It walked all the way out of the deserted factory area, towards the

roadside, standing there blankly.
Before long, an empty green taxi passed by, and Danitz's corpse raised its right arm, hailing it.
When the taxi stopped in front of him, he slowly opened the door and sat in the back.
Franca rubbed her cheeks with both hands.
"How does this feel even more horrifying than the real world... Is the Death pathway manipulating the corpse?"
Lumian didn't immediately lead his team members to track the taxi, because the mirror infused with Danitz's hair residue was still showing the current state of the Oracle's corpse.
Franca and Jenna tried Magic Mirror Divination to determine what was going on with the Oracle's corpse reanimation.
"It's not working, those beings who know a lot and are relatively safe aren't responding; they're not in Mr. Fool's dream!" Franca found she could only do a simplified version, which was asking her own spirituality in Magic Mirror Divination.
Jenna confirmed her discovery. "Yes, my Magic Mirror Divination failed too."
Lumian took a moment to contemplate before responding,
"In Mr. Fool's dream world, the subjects of inquiry for Magic Mirror Divination, apart from one's own spirituality, should only be those true gods who can directly project Themselves in. But we must ensure that the corresponding projection exists at the time of divination, and that the recited honorific name is not wrong.
"Inquiring of other creatures existing in the local spirit world might be equivalent to asking Mr. Fool or that Celestial Worthy. We might get the best revelation, or we might be directly kicked out of the dream. Hmm, we also don't have the correct descriptions of those creatures."
"Who dares to inquire of true gods..." Franca said softly.
Lumian suddenly grinned. "There's still one choice, the one with the most accurate divination results. The Major Arcana card holders mentioned it in the information, it's a magic mirror belonging to Mr. Fool."
"It hasn't come to that point yet, has it..." Franca was quite resistant.
Lumian tersely responded, his gaze still fixed on the mirror showing the Oracle's corpse's situation.
After more than twenty minutes, the taxi stopped at the entrance of a hospital with excellent landscaping and a very well-designed building.
Lumian and the others immediately saw the hospital's sign: "Mushu Hospital."

"Mushu Hospital... Is the Oracle's death related to the Mother Tree of Desire?" Franca murmured in confusion.
Lumian didn't answer her, watching as the reanimated corpse of Oracle Danitz took out a phone with multiple missed calls from his pocket, scanned a code to pay the fare, and slowly walked towards the outpatient building of Mushu Hospital.
As soon as the corpse passed through the gate, Lumian's mirror rippled with waves, emanating darkness, and quickly returned to normal, no longer showing the Oracle's current position.
"I want to teleport near Mushu Hospital, go in and see where the Oracle's corpse will go," Lumian said, withdrawing his gaze.
Franca quietly commented, "Shouldn't a corpse go to the morgue?"
Jenna then said to Lumian, "You'd better change your appearance before going in. It might be easier to expose yourself inside Mushu Hospital, and we can't affect your current identity. Hmm, Lie alone might not be enough."
Lumian pondered briefly, not wasting any more time. "Okay."
As he answered, his black hair began to grow longer.

Chapter 913: A Kind of Symbol

Seeing this, Anthony didn't try to test himself and proactively left the office.

In just about 10-20 seconds, he heard Lumian's feminized voice. "You can come in now."

Compared to before, this female voice wasn't as low and subdued, with a hint of clarity added.

Anthony pushed open the office door and saw that Lumian had changed into a slightly waist-cinching white shirt bought earlier for the female identity, paired with bluish jeans, accentuating a slender waist and long, straight legs. She also wore deep rose-colored sunglasses on the bridge of her nose. Though these were just cheap street goods, Lumian wore them with a beautiful, radiant, and sharp air.

Lumian slightly gathered the glossy black hair falling on both sides, covering most of her cheeks, and said to Anthony, "Let's go back to the rental apartment first."

Anthony carefully grabbed the sleeve of Lumian's shirt, while Franca and Jenna each took hold of an arm. Ludwig, still with a lollipop in his mouth, chose to tug at his godfather's clothes.

The group's figures soon faded and disappeared from this long-abandoned office building without cameras, reappearing in the rental apartment where dishes had not yet been washed.

Lumian said to Franca, "You drive to Mushu Hospital and wait for me outside. We may not have the chance to teleport to escape later."

This didn't mean he couldn't teleport, but rather that if he used teleport or Mirror Traversal in front of a large crowd of citizens, it would inevitably become a trending topic and might be directly locked onto by the Celestial Worthy.

"Okay," Franca tossed her lip balm and lipstick to Lumian. "Once inside the hospital, if you need to frequently look in the mirror, pretend you're touching up your makeup."

In this matter, a female appearance had a natural advantage, making it less likely for people in the dream to notice anything unusual.

Lumian caught the lipstick and lip balm, and based on the location he had obtained while monitoring the Oracle's corpse with the mirror earlier, he teleported to the plant-filled edge of Mushu Hospital. He walked out from behind several trees and turned into the crowd.

His supermodel-like height and the skin condition, contour details, and lip curve revealed between his black hair and sunglasses

made passersby and patients, even without seeing his exact appearance, look twice. They seemed to want to use their brains to fill in the blanks and reconstruct the possibly world-class beauty hidden behind the sunglasses.
Some people accidentally bumped into others, some missed a step and nearly fell.
Their only regret was that this tall beauty wearing sunglasses didn't walk gracefully enough, striding fiercely like a man.
Lumian gradually slowed his pace, as if trying to recall how Aurore usually walked.
After passing through security and entering the outpatient building, he temporarily stopped, took out a makeup mirror and lip balm, and added some shine and moisture to his pale lips.
During this process, he found that the mirror that had once been smeared with the Oracle's hair residue could again reflect some scenes.
These included Danitz's back, the medicine collection window, passing patients, and family members caring for them.
Lumian discerned the direction and walked towards the medicine collection window.
He didn't walk fast, his gaze seemingly casually surveying the people around him and the layout of the hospital's first floor.
Everything seemed normal, without any scenes of desire outbursts.
Vaguely, Lumian had a sense of familiarity.
It wasn't that he had been to a similar place before, but it came from the depths of his soul.
Lumian pursed his lips, lost in thought, *Is it Aurore's memory?*
Did she frequent this kind of large hospital before her transmigration? Well, everyone gets sick sometimes...
Did her soul fragments become a bit more active after I changed into a female form? Hmm, it must also be because Mr. Fool's dream city is very similar to her hometown, stimulating her soul fragments...
Lumian quickly suppressed the emotions in his heart, remembering that he had entered Mushu Hospital to track the whereabouts of the Oracle's corpse and observe the situation here.
His gaze swept over faces, some wearing masks, some with hidden worry, feeling that this shouldn't be much different from the situation in a normal hospital.
Suddenly, he saw a familiar figure.
It was the male orderly who had mentally broken down last night due to the female corpse coming back to life.
This orderly was wearing a mask, pushing a transfer bed as he

passed by, with no fear or worry in his eyes, almost identical to the expressions of his colleagues.
He still dares to work at this hospital? Lumian's eyebrows twitched slightly.
The orderly seemed to have forgotten about his desecration of the corpse, and had also forgotten the horror of the corpse suddenly waking up.
It was as if someone had told him that the female corpse wasn't actually dead, and his misconduct had actually helped her escape from a state of apparent death, avoiding cremation, so she had decided to forgive him.
Lumian slowly shook his head, took out the lip balm and makeup mirror, and once again tracked the whereabouts of the Oracle's corpse.
The scene presented in the mirror was an area with eight elevators. The back of Oracle Danitz had just passed through the elevator doors, with the outside button lit up with a downward arrow.
Is this going to B1? Is the destination really the morgue? Lumian passed by the front of the medicine collection window and turned towards the nearby stairwell.
There were patients and family members waiting here.
Lumian looked left and right, thinking that he should prepare some masks for him and the other Demonesses. This could more effectively conceal their faces without becoming the focus of others' attention.
The elevator came rather slowly. It took Lumian two to three minutes to wait for an elevator that was continuing downwards.
The people inside poured out, leaving only a patient sitting in a wheelchair and an orderly in green clothes pushing the wheelchair.
The orderly wore a mask, and the patient was quite elderly, with graying hair and beard.
Their gazes simultaneously turned to Lumian, with something unsettling hidden in the depths of their deep brown eyes.
Lumian, who was about to step in, suddenly stopped.
He felt that the elevator lacked light, as if it had become a giant mouth about to close.
The elevator's double doors slowly closed, the interior growing darker, as if falling into an abyss.
Lumian watched expressionlessly, abandoning his intention to enter.
He sensed intense danger.
And his spiritual intuition, coupled with the slight activity of

Aurore's soul fragments, made him vaguely aware of what was hidden in the eyes of those two people in the elevator just now.
It was an intense desire.
It was the intense desire to tear off his clothes and vent their inner cravings!
The elevator doors finally closed, the downward arrow went out, and the numbers began to change.
Going to B1, to the morgue, would be extremely dangerous...
Lumian watched for a few more seconds, silently musing to himself.
After some consideration, he gave up the impulse to go down the stairs to investigate, and had a new idea,
Should I call the police? Just say I saw the missing Danitz enter Mushu Hospital and go down to the basement...
Just as Lumian had this thought, his phone began to vibrate.
He took out his phone and saw it was from "Luo Fu".
On the ID card given by Madam Justice, Franca's name was "Luo Fu".
Lumian answered the phone somewhat awkwardly yet habitually, tentatively saying, "Hello?"
Franca, driving the vehicle and wearing earphones, looked ahead and said, "You'd better not delve deeper into Mushu Hospital now. Wait a bit longer, wait for the police to investigate."
"Why do you say that?" Lumian didn't think Franca had sensed his earlier thoughts.
Franca turned the steering wheel and said, "I was shocked by the Oracle's corpse coming back to life earlier and didn't notice some details. It only dawned on me after getting in the car.
"When the Oracle's corpse got off at Mushu Hospital's entrance, did it use a phone to scan and pay?"
"Yes." Lumian had a very deep impression of the scan-to-pay incident, as Franca had been telling them they could do this and had personally demonstrated several times.
Wearing earphones and driving the car, Franca showed a slightly proud smile.
"The Oracle has already been classified as missing by the police, and when a missing person's phone account suddenly makes a payment, don't you think it would attract the police's attention and allow them to track his movements?
"The police should be arriving at Mushu Hospital soon. If you sneak into places with secrets now, you might run into them."
"Can it work like that? The efficiency is really high..." Lumian muttered softly.
Now, he didn't need to find a way to call the police!

The police in this dream city were far more efficient than those in Trier, able to grasp key clues without his reminders.
Lumian held his phone, pretending to have received an urgent call, and left this stairwell.
He made his way back to the medicine collection area and hid among the waiting crowd.
Before long, he saw Officer Deng and the dream projection of Mr. Star leading a team of police rushing towards the previous stairwell.
Lumian played the role of a spectator watching the commotion, patiently waiting for nearly twenty minutes until the police team returned.
They were carrying a stretcher, with the person on it completely covered by a white cloth, only vaguely revealing yellowish hair.
The Oracle's corpse... Lumian made a definitive judgment using the makeup mirror in his hand.
He immediately became puzzled.
They found the reanimated corpse just like that?
Nothing happened?
...
Back in the car driven by Franca, Lumian recounted what had just happened.
Franca also had the same confusion.
"The people at Mushu Hospital didn't resist the police?
"Theoretically, Mushu Hospital should be a force formed by the infiltration of the great existence, Mother Tree of Desire, or at least operated by a Sequence 0 true god subordinate to Her..."
Lumian expressed his thoughts, "There are two possibilities:
"One, Mushu Hospital is not an external projection, but originates from Mr. Fool's impression of the Mother Tree of Desire and Her subordinates.
"Two, this is a symbol, representing an external projection. Even if it originates from great existences, it cannot directly confront the main consciousness of the dream. In this city, the official power, the police department, symbolizes the dream's main consciousness.
"In other words, individual police officers can be targeted and influenced, but confronting the entire police department is equivalent to confronting the dream itself, confronting Mr. Fool plus that Celestial Worthy."

Chapter 914: Surveillance

After stating his two guesses, Lumian added, "I felt earlier that entering the basement of Mushu Hospital would be very dangerous. If the problem there was woven by the dream's subconscious, originating from Mr. Fool's impression of the Mother Tree of Desire and Her subordinates, it shouldn't have reached this level."

His meaning was that he was more inclined towards the inference that the dream's main consciousness symbol could not directly confront it.

Jenna, sitting in the passenger seat, glanced at the gradually receding Mushu Hospital and said with a slightly furrowed brow, "But the police, represented by Mr. Star, only found the Oracle's corpse. They don't seem to have discovered any other anomalies existing in Mushu Hospital."

"This indicates that although the dream's main consciousness cannot confront directly, it has ways to conceal and deceive," Anthony expressed his opinion.

"There might also be a mole." Franca, who was driving, had read many novels and watched many movies about undercover agents and traitors, muttered. "Part of the dream's main consciousness must belong to the Celestial Worthy. He should be quite pleased to see the force infiltrated by the Mother Tree of Desire doing something, so He deliberately ignored some details."

"This also shows that regardless of whether it's Mr. Fool or that Celestial Worthy, they are actually in a state of slumber, their true consciousness blurred, only able to react to a certain extent when directly stimulated. Usually, they only occasionally provide some inspiration based on received prayers or spirituality warnings. Otherwise, we would have been discovered and kicked out long ago when interacting with ordinary people in the dream," Lumian concluded based on various events experienced over the past two days and many details mentioned in the materials provided by the Major Arcana card holders.

Franca took the opportunity to warn her teammates, "So don't think about live streaming, don't do anything in public that would become a trending topic. If we do that, as soon as the Celestial Worthy's dream identity scrolls to the corresponding video, He will immediately be stimulated and kick us out of the dream.

"Well, even if the Celestial Worthy doesn't scroll to it, His subordinates will notice it."

After a brief silence, Jenna asked, "What is live streaming?"

Anthony was equally confused.

"Will this be seen by many people?
"Similar to the front page headlines of a newspaper?"
You guys really haven't adapted as well as Lumian... Franca sighed, and while driving, she briefly explained,
"Open your phones, click on the app with the black background and white pattern I downloaded for you earlier...
"The hottest thing recently is 'True Death Metal'..."
Jenna and the others all became focused and serious, continuing to receive their Internet education.
...
Near midnight.
Lumian brought Franca through the mirror world to the Moon Plaza they had visited at noon, arriving behind a mirror in the surveillance room.
Hidden in the area behind the mirror, they saw through the mirror surface a large display screen split into multiple scenes, showing various areas of the mall, and two security guards sitting in front of the display screen for night duty.
At this time, Moon Plaza had long since closed for business, and many of the scenes shown on the surveillance were pitch black, with only parts covered by clear moonlight.
In this dream city, the moon was not crimson, but showed a faint silvery white, occasionally tinged with yellow.
Franca, both eager and cautious, stretched her right hand out of the mirror surface, grasping a slightly larger makeup mirror.
The makeup mirror immediately reflected the large screen, showing different scenes framed in individual squares.
Then, the surface of the makeup mirror rippled with illusory light invisible to the naked eye.
Mirror Maze!
The surveillance areas seen by the two security guards and the images captured by several cameras in the room were instantly replaced by mirrored illusions.
Franca had previously imagined being able to use her Beyonder powers after returning home, and now it felt like a rehearsal of her dream.
She walked out openly from behind the mirror object, put down the makeup mirror, adjusted its angle, and came to the surveillance console with Lumian.
The two security guards had no reaction to their actions, as if they hadn't seen them at all.
The scenes in their eyes were still the same as before when no outsiders had entered.
Lumian turned his gaze to Franca and said in a low voice, "Make

haste."
He didn't know how to operate this surveillance system, otherwise he would have done it himself.
Franca adjusted the mirrored images to ensure they weren't completely static, while studying the mall's surveillance system.
Thanks to researching information online and making plans beforehand, it only took her two or three minutes to bring up the surveillance footage of the supermarket area from noon.
Soon, the image froze on the scene where she and Lumian and others were returning from the supermarket entrance.
In the distance of this image, where imported goods were stacked, a figure in a white dress was walking out of the frame.
This figure had beautiful features, small and delicate ears, a fair and slender neck, and an aura so clean it seemed untouched by dust. Her hair was loosely tied up, giving a somewhat languid feeling.
"It's indeed that reanimated female corpse," Franca took out the sketch completed with the help of Dream Divination and carefully compared it.
Before Lumian could respond, she added, "This appearance, temperament, and charm are more like a demigod-level Demoness rather than a Baby Cupid of the Scrooge pathway.
"How could a Demoness be resurrected in Mushu Hospital?"
Lumian nodded slightly, refraining from making conjectures for the moment, and instead asked Franca, "Can you find out the entire activity trajectory of this female corpse in the mall?"
"Yes," Franca busily operated the surveillance system.
Soon, each scene on the large screen showed the figure of that female corpse, corresponding to different scenarios.
While searching for the female corpse's traces based on the timeline and scene conditions, Franca had already browsed through these surveillances once. She glanced at Lumian, who was focusing on observing details, and pondered,
"It feels like she's wandering aimlessly, not buying anything, entering a store for a few minutes and then leaving. Hmm, it doesn't look like she's following anyone or searching for a specific item."
Lumian compared all the passersby in each surveillance image and didn't find anyone else appearing in all of them besides the female corpse.
"Is she experiencing and touring a city like this for the first time?" Lumian thought of himself and his companions.
"And then because she has no money, she doesn't dare to buy anything?" Franca joked with a smile.

Lumian immediately shook his head.
"It shouldn't be that simple.
"We almost encountered this female corpse at noon, and after lunch, the Oracle's corpse showed anomalies. The resurrected Oracle corpse went to Mushu Hospital, which is where this female corpse was reanimated.
"If it's not arranged by that individual, not His script, such a coincidence is enough to indicate a close connection between the two."
Franca pondered for a moment and said, "If this female corpse is really a Demoness, then I've had similar situations before.
"When I first became a Witch, I received effective revelations from divination about something, but it was only revelations about time and place. So, I aimlessly wandered back and forth in an arcade street in Trier for a day, and finally encountered the thing I wanted to encounter."
Lumian, who had just become a Demoness for a short time and hadn't had similar experiences, nodded slowly and said, "You mean the reanimated female corpse received revelations through divination and came to wander in this mall?"
At this point, Lumian's eyes became dark.
"Her gain was getting closer to us, discovering clues about which mirror the Oracle's corpse was hidden behind, so that's why the Oracle's corpse showed anomalies right after lunch ended?
"Is she a subordinate of that Celestial Worthy, searching for the Oracle's corpse?
"Are the Celestial Worthy and the Mother Tree of Desire cooperating, using Mushu Hospital to obtain subordinates they can command, to harm certain dream characters?"
Franca concurred succinctly, "The fact that she could indirectly come into contact with us, on the surface it's inspiration from divination, but in reality, it should be the Law of Beyonder Characteristics Convergence at work.
"Only High-Sequence Beyonders of the Demoness and Door pathways could possibly influence the mirror world from a distance, causing the Oracle's corpse hidden in the mirror area to show anomalies.
"That female corpse might fit both situations."
Franca meant that the female corpse might be a demigod-level Demoness who had received boons from the Door pathway.
Lumian acknowledged Franca's statement and pondered for a few seconds before saying,
"But the reanimation of this female corpse was definitely not for finding the Oracle's corpse. From what that orderly confessed, she

had already been resurrected before the Oracle was killed.
"She must have a more important role, carrying out a key task?"
Franca hissed and said, "In the next few days, besides observing the people and events around Mr. Fool, we need to find a way to locate this female corpse, see if we can eliminate her covertly without the Celestial Worthy noticing."
If this were in the real world, Franca definitely wouldn't say this, because she wouldn't be sure whether that reanimated female corpse was Sequence 4, Sequence 3, or even higher. She would only suggest asking the Major Arcana card holders for help. But in the dream city, everyone was currently suppressed to the Sequence 7 level. A demigod-level Demoness would only have some more special abilities than her, with no essential difference in strength. Lumian was also a demigod-level Demoness, and their team had the number advantage, capable of ganging up.
Lumian thought for a moment and said, "There should be surveillance on the streets outside too, right? Can we find out where this female corpse ultimately went from the surveillance?"
"We could, but that would require infiltrating government departments. If discovered, it would be equivalent to confronting the dream's main consciousness." Franca didn't agree with taking such a risk now. There was still so much information they hadn't gathered!
Lumian suppressed the impulse in his heart and worked with Franca to restore the surveillance footage, erase their own traces, and retreat back into the mirror object. Then, Franca ended the Mirror Maze and took away that makeup mirror.
The two security guards only felt that the surveillance screens flickered briefly, but they quickly returned to normal.
Franca and Lumian returned to the car parked on the adjacent street, meeting up with Jenna and others who were responsible for backup.
As the vehicle drove towards the old town, Lumian and Franca, who was driving, told their teammates about the findings from watching the surveillance and their own conjectures.
As they were talking, Lumian suddenly fell silent.
"What's wrong?" Jenna asked.
Lumian said in a deep voice, "We thought of going to the mall to check the surveillance to find that female corpse. Would that female corpse also think of checking the surveillance to see if any women with outstanding appearances had passed by?"
Those who could hide a corpse behind a mirror were likely to be Demonesses too!
Franca's expression changed, and she blurted out, "The

surveillance room!"

Chapter 915: Mysticism Must Keep Up with the Times

Moon Plaza, inside the surveillance room.

Lumian brought Franca, Jenna, Anthony, and Ludwig back behind that mirror-like object, gazing through the mirror surface at the two security guards and the large screen.

Compared to when they left earlier, nothing had changed here. Everything looked normal.

Franca pondered for two seconds and said, "Has she not come yet, or has she already been here, ahead of us?"

If that female corpse had already checked the surveillance earlier, she would likely have discovered Lumian and the others. After all, the characteristics of Demonesses were quite distinctive, and beautiful women plus a handsome man were even more eye-catching. As long as the reanimated female corpse was willing to spend enough time checking segment by segment, frame by frame, with the reminders of spiritual intuition, she shouldn't miss the corresponding footage.

In that case, Lumian and the others would have to consider changing identities, modifying appearances, and changing residences.

For an already impoverished family, this could truly be an exacerbation.

Franca could only pray to Mr. Fool, hoping that the female corpse would come only at midnight. After all, unlike them, she didn't have a specific time and corresponding location, and couldn't purposefully check the surveillance in just a few minutes or even tens of seconds to lock onto the people she wanted to find. She would have to check all the surveillance videos covering the entire mall for ten to fifteen minutes before and after. If unlucky, the time spent could be measured in hours.

The spiritual intuition of Demonesses was also suppressed to the Sequence 7 level. That female corpse obviously couldn't rely on this for very precise screening.

"Both are possible," Lumian stared outside the mirror.

Separated by a layer of mirror surface and in different spaces, he couldn't directly see whether there was a Mirror Maze in the surveillance room at this moment.

And the reanimated female corpse indeed seemed very much like a demigod of the Demoness pathway, likely possessing anti-divination abilities.

Jenna was also observing the situation in the surveillance room

and asked puzzledly, "Does the reanimated female corpse also know about things like surveillance, and understand how to operate surveillance systems?"
She felt that the reanimated female corpse was a projection of some external force, probably similar to themselves, just with a different method of entry. She and Lumian and the others only learned what surveillance was, what it was used for, and how to avoid it after Franca's reminders and explanations. And except for Franca, none of them knew how to operate a surveillance system!
If we can't do it, how can a newly reanimated female corpse?
Franca pondered and answered,
"Perhaps the reanimated female corpse is also part of the dream, a Demoness that one of Mr. Fool's avatars once encountered. And the Celestial Worthy, using Mushu Hospital, made this Demoness go through a process of death and resurrection, turning her into a completely obedient subordinate, or rather, puppet."
As part of the dream, except for those set as children, fools, lunatics, or illiterates, everyone "innately" knew the concept and existence of surveillance.
"Even if she's part of the dream, she wouldn't naturally master how to manipulate surveillance systems, unless she was previously engaged in this industry, or had studied it in advance like you," Jenna objected.
"That's true," Franca suddenly had a flash of inspiration and took out her phone, intending to search on apps like Weibo, Zhihu, and various circles to see if there were any similar questions recently. Perhaps the reanimated female corpse was looking at her phone while using "currently waiting online" rhetoric to urge netizens to answer how to operate a certain company's surveillance system, while trying to bring up the desired video based on the netizens' suggestions.
To Franca's disappointment, there was no signal in the mirror world, and she couldn't get online!
Lumian then said, "There's another possibility. That female corpse also has a guide, a guide like Franca."
"Uh..." Franca stuffed her phone back into her pants pocket.
She understood what Lumian was saying: A member of April Fool's, the not-yet-dead Loki!
Wasn't it said that Loki could have been reborn through possession by an Angel of the Seer pathway?
Well, whether it was Loki or that Angel of the Seer pathway, they were both subordinates of the Celestial Worthy!
"When we checked the surveillance earlier, we didn't find anyone like Loki around the reanimated female corpse," Franca recalled.

"The Faceless ability at Sequence 7 level," Lumian had already considered this issue. "And this is inside a mall, he could change outfits from time to time."
Franca nodded slowly and continued to observe the surveillance room outside the mirror, hoping to wait for the reanimated female corpse and the possible existence of Loki.
After watching for a few seconds, she suddenly asked out of curiosity, "Does this kind of screen, this kind of surveillance scenario, count as a mirror world?"
"From a mystical concept, I don't think so. It's not a reflection or inversion of the current scene," Lumian answered instinctively.
Jenna and Anthony were somewhat confused by Franca's question.
"Mystical concepts also need to keep up with the times to match the social scenarios of the new era," Franca muttered before saying, "Although surveillance is not a reflection or inversion of the current scene, it belongs to the reflection of scenes elsewhere. It has some of the functions and characteristics of mirrors, just with the reflection and display separated in different places."
Lumian didn't know how to refute for a moment and could only directly express his view, "I think it's closer to the world within paintings, perhaps even incorporating the informatized characteristics of the Mystery Pryer pathway at high levels."
"Then it's a hybrid product of the mirror world, the world within paintings, and the information world!" Franca's main energy was on observing the situation in the surveillance room, and she was unwilling to delve deeper into issues that couldn't yield accurate answers at the moment, so she quickly made a guess.
Lumian half-closed his eyes, sensed for a moment, and said, "Indeed, it has a bit of the qualities of the mirror world. We can traverse through it."
As soon as he finished speaking, Anthony, who had been silent all along, said in a deep voice, "Don't you think those two security guards outside are a bit strange?
"It's been two or three minutes, and they haven't moved at all, like they've turned into statues..."
Statues? Franca's heart stirred, and she took out a mirror, carefully extending it beyond the current mirror surface.
She quickly adjusted the angle, and using the reflection of light and the most basic function of the mirror, she saw the side profile of one of the security guards.
On the slightly dark makeup mirror, only illuminated by the reflection of the screen's light, that half-face had no expression, partly hidden in the dim environment, partly slightly illuminated, the two intertwining and sometimes changing.

His eyes were constantly fixed on the surveillance screen, with a hint of cold gray seemingly hidden in the depths of his pupils.
He looked alive, still with spirituality, but that was all—just alive, just with spirituality.
"Partial petrification of organs?" Franca frowned and whispered.
Lumian didn't answer, but looked around.
"The reanimated female corpse has indeed been here, after Franca and I finished watching the surveillance and left.
"I'll go out and search to see if there are any clues left. You guard against unexpected situations."
Jenna and the others nodded, without objection.
Lumian pressed his hand against the mirror surface and walked out as if passing through a layer of water curtain.
In his male form, he circled to the front of the two security guards and found that they had both turned into warmth-carrying statues, expressionlessly looking ahead, motionless, which seemed exceptionally eerie in the surveillance room where only the screen's light flickered.
Lumian's gaze moved away from the gray-white hidden in the eyes of the two security guards and turned to the large screen displaying dozens or hundreds of scenes simultaneously.
There was nothing unusual about that, but the human-machine interface below was frozen on a certain operation.
And Lumian remembered that Franca had restored it to its initial state before leaving.
Fleeing in a hurry?
Did that female corpse sense the disturbance in the mirror world and urgently traverse away through the large screen itself?
Will she circle back to see who infiltrated the surveillance room?
As these thoughts flashed through his mind, Lumian suddenly turned sideways, looking towards the mirror object he had come out from.
Almost simultaneously, on the surveillance footage, in a dark corner, a pale but alluring hand stretched out, extending beyond the screen.
In the area behind the mirror, while Lumian was investigating the surveillance system, Franca suddenly heard Ludwig making smacking sounds.
What is he eating now? Franca instinctively turned to look at the little boy.
She saw Ludwig opening his mouth, constantly sucking in air, chewing and swallowing.
Uh... Franca suddenly felt a bit guilty.
"Why are you eating air?" she asked.

Ludwig answered with a satisfied expression, "Delicious, there are many things with spirituality."
Many things with spirituality in the air? Franca was stunned for a moment, then suddenly had a strong sense of danger.
The mystical pathogen of Demonesses?
"Mirror Substitution!" she called out directly, actively triggering her own Mirror Substitution.
After hearing Ludwig's answer, Jenna's spiritual intuition also received a dangerous signal.
Without Franca's reminder, she followed and triggered her Mirror Substitution.
Anthony was a second slower than the two of them.
At this moment, at the edge of the spider web-like illusory tunnel, a figure was quickly outlined. She wore a white dress, had a loose bun, with beautiful features and a clean aura—clearly the reanimated female corpse.
This female corpse held a mirror in her hand, which had already reflected Franca's figure. Her other hand was burning with quiet black flames, quickly covering the mirror surface.
Silently, Franca's figure, which had just degenerated into a mirror, burst into eerie black flames from the inside out, quickly losing spirituality, falling to the ground, and shattering into pieces.
Seeing that the assassination attempt had failed and that there were four enemies, the reanimated female corpse immediately stepped back and disappeared at the edge of the illusory dark tunnel.
This caused the seven Demoness black flames created by Jenna and the Frenzy used by Anthony to all miss their target.
Inside the surveillance room, Lumian suddenly turned around, with a straight sword already condensed from frost in his hand.
He swung this crystal-clear straight sword towards the hand reaching out from inside the surveillance screen.
That hand suddenly retracted, and Lumian's frost straight sword consequently fell onto the surface of the screen.
It bizarrely dematerialized, bringing Lumian along as it melted into the large screen, diving in.

Chapter 916: Real and Fake

After the reanimated female corpse retreated into the dark tunnel, Franca's first reaction as her figure was just being outlined was to use the Ice Amulet that Lumian had remade, bringing Jenna and Anthony to chase after the enemy before she completely left this mirror world.

She gripped the crystal-clear charm that she had already taken out of the Traveler's Bag, but her spiritual intuition made her pause.

The destination of the reanimated female corpse's Mirror Traversal was unknown, and there might be her companions waiting. Rashly chasing after her could likely lead them into a trap!

Moreover, chasing after her meant separating from Lumian, making it easy for them to be defeated one by one.

Franca gazed for two seconds, then immediately said to Jenna, Anthony, and Ludwig, who was still eating "air" in big gulps, "Leave here, go to the surveillance room!"

Who knew how long the reanimated female corpse had been hiding at the edge of the tunnel, producing how many mystical pathogens. Staying in this area would lead to increasingly severe infection, until they fell ill!

And relying solely on Ludwig eating like this, mouthful by mouthful, who knew how long it would take to clear out the mystical pathogens that could continuously reproduce. More importantly, this sealed Angel's physical condition had also been lowered to the Sequence 7 level. The mystical pathogens he ate wouldn't affect him, but those that invaded his skin, eyes, and respiratory tract could definitely infect him.

At that point, it would be a race to see whether Ludwig finished eating the mystical pathogens first, or the mystical pathogens defeated him first.

Additionally, Franca and Jenna's Demoness black flames were also restricted by the dream, only able to be produced a few at a time—cluster after cluster—unable to burn large areas of surrounding mystical pathogens to create a sufficiently safe environment.

However, the dream's restrictions had both disadvantages and advantages. The Plague ability of the reanimated female corpse was also suppressed to the Sequence 7 level, preventing Franca and the others from becoming infected and falling ill too quickly.

Jenna and Anthony didn't question Franca's decision, only Ludwig was reluctant to leave.

He wanted to eat even if he got sick!

He wanted to eat even if he died!

Jenna grabbed the little boy, forcibly dragging him out of the area

behind the mirror, as his physical qualities had been comprehensively reduced to Sequence 7.
At such an urgent moment, Jenna actually felt another digestion of the Affliction potion.
"Let me go! Let go..." Before Ludwig could finish speaking, he had already passed through the mirror surface and arrived in the surveillance room.
But they didn't see Lumian.
"Was Lumian also attacked?" Franca quickly looked around with a solemn expression.
Or had he gone chasing after an enemy?
Just as Franca finished speaking, she saw that every surveillance scene on the large screen had changed.
They once again displayed the scenes from noon when the reanimated female corpse had appeared.
In those scenes arranged in a crisscrossing matrix, the reanimated female corpses that originally belonged to the surveillance footage either raised their heads or half-turned their bodies, all staring uniformly towards the outside of the screen.
Wearing white dresses and loose buns, they instantly had the same expression change, their fair and delicate hands reaching towards the camera one after another, extending out of the surveillance screen, reaching for Franca, Jenna, and the others outside.
They crawled out of the screen one by one, their faces dark, with occasional flashes of light.
Seeing this scene, Franca, relying only on spiritual intuition and Demoness vision, briefly couldn't distinguish which of these many reanimated female corpses were real and which were fake.
For a moment, she even doubted whether they were all real, or all fake.
She took out the Cannon Gun that had become the Inevitable Gun, aiming at the surveillance footage, intending to shatter that screen, so that the reanimated female corpses that hadn't fully crawled out would be thrown into the depths of the "surveillance world" with the shattering of the area behind the screen, making it difficult to reach reality.
Franca's finger was on the trigger, but she didn't pull it.
She felt that Lumian's disappearance might be because he had entered the "surveillance world", and if she shattered the screen, and the "surveillance world" truly had some characteristics of the mirror world, Lumian would also be swallowed by the turbulent flow, which would be very dangerous.
Although Franca couldn't respond in time, she still had

companions.
Anthony stepped forward, his eyes vertical, tinged with a pale golden color.
He immediately emanated a terrifying aura as if standing at the top of the food chain.
Awe!
He used a range-type Awe targeting that surveillance screen!
The reanimated female corpses crawling out of the surveillance footage one after another froze for a moment, but quickly returned to normal.
It was as if they hadn't been resurrected, still corpses, naturally not afraid or panicked due to the awe!
Jenna quickly turned her head, pointing at those reanimated female corpses, and asked Ludwig, "Which one tastes the best?"
The one that tastes the best should be the real body!
And judging whether food tasted good or not was Ludwig's specialty!
Ludwig swallowed his saliva and pointed to the surveillance footage in the bottom right corner.
"I want that one!
"That one tastes the best!"
Before Ludwig could answer, Franca had already concealed her figure. When he pointed out the food he wanted most, Franca's figure, wearing a black T-shirt and women's pantaloons, quickly outlined at the side of the reanimated female corpse in the bottom right corner.
She held the Inevitable Gun in one hand and the nearly invisible Wintry Blade in the other, stabbing the latter towards the target that hadn't fully crawled out of the screen, towards the temple next to the delicate ear.
Crack, that reanimated female corpse shattered like a mirror, along with the figures of other female corpses becoming illusory, disappearing simultaneously in front of the surveillance screen.
The next second, beside the mirror decorative item that Franca and the others had crawled out from, the reanimated female corpse with beautiful features, a slender neck, wearing a white dress and a loose bun, silently emerged.
She gripped an ice crystal dagger covered in black flames in one hand, suddenly stabbing towards Anthony's chest.
...
After passing through the surveillance screen, Lumian appeared in a dark and silent empty mall.
At this time, the escalators had stopped running, and all the shops had pulled down their shutters.

Lumian quickly scanned around and saw a figure in a white dress flash past the passage leading to the men's and women's restrooms.
The black mark on Lumian's right shoulder lit up, allowing him to directly teleport over.
As his figure was just being outlined at the entrance of the passage, his left palm had already taken out his phone.
Lumian quickly glanced at the phone screen that had lit up and found no signal.
This was exactly what he wanted to confirm.
Is this an alternate space formed by surveillance footage, an illusory world? It's very similar to the mirror world, and also very similar to the world within paintings... As thoughts flashed through Lumian's mind, he stuffed the phone into the Traveler's Bag instead of his pants pocket.
He was worried that the upcoming battle might damage the phone.
For an already impoverished family, this would be a major loss!
In Lumian's blue eyes, that female figure in a white dress had already run to the corner.
Seeing was believing. Almost simultaneously, Lumian blinked behind the target, thrusting the ice crystal straight sword.
Just as the ice sword touched that female figure, the target suddenly wavered like water ripples and disappeared without a trace.
An illusion—just an illusion.
An illusion created using the mirror of the sink outside the men's and women's restrooms!
At this moment, in the dark corner at the entrance of the men's restroom, a vague figure quickly emerged, holding a medium-sized mirror, reflecting Lumian's male form wearing a shirt and trousers.
Taking advantage of the opportunity when Lumian's attention was completely on the illusion, this vague figure pressed its hand covered in Demoness black flames towards the mirror surface.
Black flames suddenly erupted from Lumian's eyes, nose, mouth, and other places, but his figure began to fade inch by inch, gradually dissipating.
This was also an illusion!
Behind the vague figure in the dark corner at the entrance of the restroom, Lumian's body outlined, his eyes iron-black, his right hand clenched into a fist, in a posture of muscles swelling and enlarging, suddenly striking towards the junction of the enemy's neck and back.

Cull plus Mighty Blow!
You can use mirrors to create illusions, so can I!
Bang!
This punch shattered the vague figure into pieces, scattering around like glass shards.
Immediately after, Lumian felt invisible spider silk wrapping around him from all directions, trying to bind his hands, feet, and torso, and intending to interfere with his movements in different ways.
Lumian immediately grunted, and bursts of black flames binding madness and danger spontaneously appeared, falling onto several invisible spider silks.
The Flames of Destruction ignited those spider silks instantly, just like real Hunter flames, then quickly spread, devouring all the combustibles around, and burning the mystical pathogens permeating the air.
In just the blink of an eye, Lumian had rid himself of the influence of the Demoness spider web and the hidden Plague.
And at the entrance of this passage, a female figure clearly appeared in the light of the burning spider web.
She wore a white dress, had a loose bun, beautiful features, delicate ears, and a slender neck—it was the reanimated female corpse.
...
Inside the surveillance room.
As Franca's strike failed to succeed, the experienced Jenna and Anthony changed their positions.
The latter thus avoided the ice crystal dagger assassination of the reanimated female corpse.
But this also gathered the three of them in a small area within the not-so-large surveillance room.
The reanimated female corpse's gaze then turned to the two security guards sitting motionlessly in their positions.
One of the security guards immediately broke free from his statue-like state and suddenly stood up.
The next second, his body was like it had been filled with a large amount of gas, rapidly swelling into a ball.
During this process, the gray-white in the depths of his eyes was tinged with a yellow-green light.
Boom!
This security guard exploded like a balloon stretched to its limit. His flesh and internal organs were torn into pieces, carrying yellow-green pus, enveloped in the impact storm, sweeping towards every corner of the surveillance room, covering Franca,

Jenna, and the others.
A virus bomb? Franca's pupils suddenly dilated.
That reanimated female corpse was also within the range of the exploding body, but she was prepared, taking a step back and hiding in the mirror decorative item.

Chapter 917: Disease Bomb

Chapter 917 Disease Bomb

The flesh and blood oozing yellow-green pus sprayed like sudden rain towards everyone in the surveillance room, accompanied by the sudden explosion.

Franca had no time to use the Ice Amulet, nor to grab Jenna and the others to bring them into the compact mirror in her hand. She could only face the explosion, which wasn't too powerful, and the obviously dangerous flesh, blood, and viscous fluid.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

In this situation, the three of them could only actively trigger their Mirror Substitutions, first being shattered by the impact wave, then being coated with sticky flesh and still-writhing yellow-green pus.

Ludwig, who had also been given a Mirror Substitution by each of the three Demonesses, didn't use it himself. Instead, he crouched down, hugging his body tightly to minimize his "exposed area".

During this process, he opened his mouth.

His mouth corners stretched without any restriction, extending all the way to the back of his head. His upper lip pushed his eyes, nose, forehead, and other parts to face the ceiling directly, while his lower lip nearly touched his chest.

Splat, splat, splat, the yellow-green flesh mixed in the explosion's blast rushed into Ludwig's enormous mouth, heading straight for his stomach.

Unfortunately, Ludwig, enjoying this buffet, only lasted two seconds before involuntarily triggering his Mirror Substitution, shattering into pieces.

This abnormally terrifying giant mouth shape seemed to be all appearance without sufficient strength, only at the Sequence 7 level.

The explosive blast subsided in an instant, and the figures of Franca, Jenna, and the others were reoutlined in the surveillance room, which was now covered everywhere with viscous flesh and yellow-green pus.

As Demonesses of Affliction, Franca and Jenna both instinctively believed that this place was now full of dangerous diseases, rapidly infecting them.

Without hesitation, Franca raised her right hand, revealing the Ice Amulet she was gripping tightly.

This crystal-clear charm had been remade by Lumian and could now be used for Mirror Traversal four times.

As soon as they saw Franca reveal the Ice Amulet, Jenna and

Anthony immediately moved closer to her, grabbing her arm and sleeve. Ludwig hesitated for a moment but still joined the vile Demonesses.
The next second, the four figures blurred and entered the compact mirror in Franca's other hand.
Franca didn't linger at all, bringing her companions to traverse into another metal decorative item with a mirror effect in the surveillance room.
Smack!
The compact mirror, no longer held by anyone, fell to the ground and shattered into pieces, causing the corresponding area behind the mirror to collapse.
These shards would take different amounts of time to become mirrors again in the mystical sense—without considering other factors, the larger the shard and the better the mirror effect, the shorter the time needed to regenerate the area behind the mirror. Conversely, smaller shards would take longer, and if too small, they might risk never becoming mystical mirrors again.
After transferring to the interior of the mirrored decorative item, Franca spoke rapidly while remaining vigilant against a sudden attack from the reanimated female corpse, "A Demoness of Despair doesn't have the ability to make people half-dead and turn them into plague bombs...
"Could it be a Demoness of Unaging?"
"It could also be with help from the Order of All Extinction or possession of a similar item," Jenna suggested another possibility based on her own feelings.
"Is Mushu Hospital not just home to the Mother Tree of Desire?" Franca suddenly had an inspiration. "The hospital as a whole should simultaneously possess the healing abilities related to the Great Mother pathway, the influence of the Mother Tree of Desire pathway on spirit, desire, corpses, and hospital urban legends, as well as control over diseases and pathogens from the one the Order of All Extinction believes in or the Demoness pathway!"
As Franca spoke without any embellishment, she observed the situation in the surveillance room and attempted to use the Ice Amulet's ability to transmit information through mirrors to send simple intelligence to a certain mirror on Lumian.
As long as Lumian hadn't left the current Huafeng District, he would definitely receive it!
Jenna guarded against the direction of the illusory tunnel that resembled a spider web, while Anthony said carefully, "That reanimated female corpse is almost unaffected by Awe, making me feel she's more like a dead person than a living one."

Franca's thoughts raced, and she immediately had two guesses.
"Is she an awakened Zombie, with a Mother Tree of Desire believer hiding nearby controlling her?
"Or, didn't we guess earlier that she might have a companion, possibly Loki? Is it possible that she's actually a marionette, with the Marionettist hiding somewhere nearby controlling her?"
Franca had confronted Loki before and had contact with spies from the Bureau 8 of Intis, so she was quite familiar with the antics of Marionettists.
"But according to the information provided by the Major Arcana card holders, even normal Marionettists can only control marionettes within a range of about 100 meters. Now, with their abilities suppressed to Sequence 7 level, I believe their maximum distance from the marionettes won't exceed 40 meters. Before we came to the surveillance room, we checked the surroundings and there was no one..." Jenna raised an objection.
At this point, she suddenly paused.
It wasn't that there was no one; in fact, there were two people!
Franca and Anthony also realized the issue and simultaneously turned their gaze towards the front of the surveillance screen.
There were indeed people within a 50-meter range—those two security guards!
One of the security guards had been turned into a plague bomb and had already disintegrated into disease-spreading flesh, but the other security guard was still sitting in his position, his eyes concealing a gray-white deep inside, staring motionlessly at the large screen!
Franca and Anthony's gaze fell on that security guard.
The security guard seemed to sense something and suddenly turned his body.
His clothes were now tattered, his body pitted and uneven, different areas of his face either missing skin, suffering abrasions, or with flesh split open and festering.
These were the "aftereffects" of being directly hit by the explosion of the other security guard.
The security guard, with half his face almost unrecognizable as human, reflected the flickering light from the surveillance screen, curled his lips, and revealed an exaggerated, terrifying, and sinister smile.
As his smile bloomed, his body rapidly swelled, becoming a human-shaped balloon like his colleague.
Bang!
The balloon burst, and countless viscous flesh and yellow-green pus splattered onto the surface of the metal decorative item where

Franca and the others were hiding, smearing it into a mess and preventing Franca and Anthony from seeing the outside situation clearly.
"Let's change positions," Franca said, turning to Jenna and Ludwig, seizing the opportunity while they still had a few more Mirror Traversal charges.
...
In the Moon Plaza formed by the surveillance footage.
Lumian bent his back, drew the Sword of Courage, and sprinted from outside the men's and women's restrooms towards the reanimated female corpse at the entrance of the passage.
Behind him, on the wash basin mirror between the two restrooms, a female figure wearing a white dress with a loose bun suddenly appeared.
This was a projection created by the Demoness of Despair using the mirror!
Although it only possessed a fraction of the original body's power, it was still capable of assassination. It aimed to deliver a fatal blow to Lumian from behind!
Almost simultaneously, another figure emerged behind this female figure.
That figure had black hair, beautiful features, and a cold expression—it was Lumian's feminized image.
This projection, completed with the help of Precision, instantly turned into a ball of black flames brewing extreme destruction in silence, completely enveloping the mirror image projection of the reanimated female corpse, causing her to be thoroughly ignited amid painful wails.
Thud! Thud! Thud! Lumian, wielding the Sword of Courage, continued without any pause, charging towards the reanimated female corpse without looking back.
At this moment, in front of the reanimated female corpse, crystal-clear but sharp frost spears suddenly condensed, like a beautiful and clean hedgehog showing its spines.
Such a forest of ice spears couldn't be accomplished by a Sequence 7 Witch. Only a Beyonder who had reached the Demoness of Despair level and gained further control over frost, but was currently restricted to Sequence 7 level, could do this. It was equivalent to the Ice Spear Condensation ability evolving into Ice Spear Forest at Sequence 4, but now the Ice Spear Forest was only at the Sequence 7 level.
If Lumian didn't stop in time, he would crash into this forest of ice spears, being pierced through and creating multiple bloody holes.
At this moment, Lumian's figure suddenly became blurry and

distorted, like an image displayed through electromagnetic signals suffering from strong interference.
It took only the blink of an eye from becoming blurry and distorted to completely disappearing. Lumian's body quickly outlined behind the reanimated female corpse.
He swung the Sword of Courage diagonally, chopping towards the target's shoulder.
With a whoosh, crimson flames ignited on the surface of the Sword of Courage.
Boom, Lumian's single stroke cleaved the reanimated female corpse into two pieces, exploding her into mirror shards.
The reanimated female corpse, having used a substitute, didn't appear immediately, seemingly disappearing into the dark, empty fourth floor of the mall.
Lumian's expression didn't change at all as he pressed the Sword of Courage downwards in one smooth motion.
Boom! Crimson fireballs flew out from the sword, indiscriminately covering this area, collapsing walls and igniting merchandise.
The crimson fire hell quickly engulfed nearly half a floor in continuously rising high temperatures.
Under such a wide-range indiscriminate attack, the figure of the reanimated female corpse was affected, forced out of her invisible state, and appeared to Lumian's side and rear.
...
Inside the surveillance room.
The reanimated female corpse who had previously fought with Franca and the others left her hiding place in the mirrored object and appeared in the room now covered everywhere with viscous flesh and yellow-green pus.
Taking advantage of the opportunity that various pathogens and decay forces were permeating this place, which would quickly infect and affect Franca and the others once they entered, she condensed a long ice spear covered in white frost in her hand and thrust it towards the surveillance screen, which already had multiple dents and was covered with flesh and pus.
The power of the two previous Disease Bombs wasn't strong, mainly focused on spreading pathogens and decay forces, so they couldn't directly destroy the large screen that was at a certain distance from them.
Now, the reanimated female corpse wanted to personally destroy the surveillance screen, causing the corresponding alternate space to collapse, making the enemies fighting there and her other "self" fall into the chaotic flow together, to be torn into pieces!

Chapter 918: Tacit Cooperation

Just as the reanimated female corpse's frost-covered ice crystal spear was about to pierce the surveillance screen, a gunshot rang out. A bright yellow bullet arrived first, striking the middle of the ice crystal spear and causing it to suddenly shatter and break apart piece by piece.

After transferring to another mirrored decorative item, Franca immediately understood the opponent's intentions upon seeing the reanimated female corpse's actions. She quickly took out the Inevitable Gun, extended it through the mirror surface, and pulled the trigger.

Having successfully prevented the ice crystal spear's strike, she immediately moved to withdraw her hands, pretending to traverse to other mirrors with Jenna, Anthony, and Ludwig in order to lure the reanimated female corpse in to surround this enemy.

However, the reanimated female corpse didn't even glance in her direction. Sharp frost spears suddenly condensed in front of her body, all thrusting towards the large screen simultaneously.

It was like a huge ice flower carved out of ice was blooming.

Franca's pupils dilated instantly. Taking advantage of her hands not yet having returned to the area behind the mirror, she pulled the Inevitable Gun's trigger once again.

Bang!

That classically styled brass-colored revolver fired an iron-black bullet, which created a small explosion upon striking one of the frost spears.

The explosion covered all the frost spears, tearing them apart and scattering them in all directions.

Heavy Strike!

Splat splat splat, some ice crystal fragments inevitably hit the surveillance screen, creating multiple dead pixels and areas where colors bled together on the large screen.

Franca was nearly scared to death—the large screen had almost been completely damaged!

She immediately left the mirrored decorative item and returned to the surveillance room, launching an all-out attack against the reanimated female corpse.

In this situation, the best strategy was to use offense to suppress the opponent and prevent her from destroying the surveillance screen. Pure defense wouldn't last long, as the item that needed protection was a relatively fragile technological product.

One can be a thief for a thousand days, but how can you guard against a thief for a thousand days? There will always be gaps in

defenses!
Bang! Bang! Bang! Franca continuously pulled the trigger, firing bullets to force the reanimated female corpse away from the area closer to the large screen.
Jenna also left the area behind the mirror, directly guarding in front of the surveillance console to prevent stray bullets from damaging the screen.
Almost simultaneously, Jenna felt herself collide with an invisible spider web, with transparent thin threads constricting her body.
Some of these threads bound her limbs, while others stirred up her condition, striving to restrict her movements and interfere with her casting of black magic.
Fortunately, Jenna now had relatively rich combat experience. As soon as she left the mirrored decorative item, she condensed several bizarre Demoness black flames around herself. Now she immediately let them fall, burning the spirituality of the transparent spider silk and spreading out.
The intense feeling of constriction instantly lessened somewhat. Jenna quickly sidestepped, shielding the large screen.
Crack!
She used a Mirror Substitution to block both the reanimated female corpse's opportunistic attack on the surveillance screen and the stray bullets created by Franca's continuous shooting.
During this process, Franca emptied six ordinary bullets, hitting the reanimated female corpse once and consuming one of her Mirror Substitutions.
She then retreated to the front of the large screen, using a special loader to reload bullets, while Jenna instinctively lunged forward, replacing Franca, using her own gun, frost, and black magic to attack furiously, suppressing the enemy.
With everyone currently at the Sequence 7 level, a short-term reckless outburst was still very effective!
In this way, Franca and Jenna continuously rotated, one defending, one attacking, one reloading bullets, the other firing rapidly as if unconcerned about running out of ammunition. They temporarily restricted the reanimated female corpse to the area near the door. However, because the opponent had Mirror Substitutions and strong spiritual intuition, Franca had not yet used bullets like Impregnating Bullet or triggered effects like Sure Hit or Certain Death.
She was waiting for an opportunity, because a Sequence 7 Demoness shouldn't be able to use many Mirror Substitutions!
Even if the reanimated female corpse had once reached the demigod level and gained the characteristic of reduced Mirror

Substitution consumption, allowing her to use a few more Mirror Substitutions than Franca and the others who were currently at the same Sequence 7 level, it certainly wouldn't be many more.
After fighting intensely for dozens of seconds, both Franca and Jenna felt weakened, their lungs like hot bellows continuously exhaling fiery breaths.
At the same time, they felt varying degrees of pain throughout their bodies.
They were well aware that this was caused by the diseases and decay spread by the two plague bombs earlier. Due to the viscous flesh and yellow-green pus covering every part of the surveillance room, the mystical pathogens and decay forces were continuously strengthening. The infection had finally occurred in the two Demonesses of Affliction who had disease resistance, and it was gradually worsening.
Neither Franca nor Jenna were willing to immediately use a Mirror Substitution to resolve the disease and decay. Their Mirror Substitutions were now very limited in number, and they wanted to conserve them to protect the large screen.
What puzzled Franca was that although her Inevitable Gun was also continuously spreading disease and decay, the reanimated female corpse didn't seem to be significantly affected, only slightly weaker than before.
Could she really be a zombie or a marionette, immune to most mystical pathogens and with strong resistance to decay forces? She only initially affected Jenna with the spider web, then abandoned this strategy. Was it because the spider web was a flammable object with spirituality, which would cause the Demoness black flames—which could only be produced one by one or in small clusters—to spread, burning the mystical pathogens and decay forces in the air, slowing down the speed of our onset of illness and the progress of symptom severity? As this thought flashed through Franca's mind, she actively began to create a spider web.
The invisible spider silk entangled both the reanimated female corpse and Jenna, forcing the former to use her own Demoness black flames to evade, and reminding Jenna that she could produce and consume her own, letting this area fall completely into the burning of Demoness black flames, thereby clearing out the mystical pathogens and reducing the intensity of the decay forces!
...
Inside Moon Plaza in the surveillance footage.
Lumian was suppressing the reanimated female corpse in all

aspects, but due to her Mirror Substitutions, strong spiritual intuition, and rich combat experience, he couldn't achieve a quick victory.
By now, the flames had spread, turning most of the fourth floor of the mall into a crimson sea. Lumian released his accumulated spirituality and once again flashed behind the "reanimated" female corpse.
Instead of directly swinging the Sword of Courage, he pushed his left palm forward.
At some point, his palm had already been gripping a cheap silver and black bracelet, while his eyes showed a silver-black hue, with what seemed like an illusory long river flowing slowly inside.
The reanimated female corpse didn't hesitate. Following the prompting of her spiritual intuition, she was about to actively trigger a Mirror Substitution.
At this moment, the toxic thick smoke produced by the burning entered her throat, while the high temperature caused her black hair to start self-igniting.
These environmentally-induced problems made the reanimated female corpse instinctively shrink her body, slowing her down by a beat.
Magnified Fate!
Lumian had already used Magnified Fate twice before, without achieving satisfactory results. The Weakening pathogen he had secretly spread, which could survive for a longer time in high-temperature flames, also hadn't worked as he had expected, only imperceptibly accelerating the rate of the reanimated female corpse's spirituality consumption.
Now, taking advantage of the environmental changes brought by the long-burning fierce flames, he finally grasped the opportunity, successfully turning the corresponding stream of fate into the main trunk.
As the reanimated female corpse slightly shrank her body, the crimson flames covering the surface of the Sword of Courage suddenly extinguished, revealing the iron-black metal blade beneath.
Parts of this blade were smooth and flat, reflecting the silhouette of the reanimated female corpse.
In the next second, the black Flames of Destruction that Lumian had condensed in advance fell onto the metal "mirror surface" and drilled into it.
Unable to use a Mirror Substitution in time, the reanimated female corpse let out a painful sound. Her body shattered with a crack, re-outlining at the edge of the crimson hell. However, the

black flames that erupted from inside to outside, hiding ferocity and terror, continued to burn her, only partially extinguished.
Once a Demoness of Despair's curse succeeded, the characteristic that it couldn't be transferred by substitutes when suppressed to Sequence 7 level became a situation where a substitute could only transfer part of the curse damage.
Crack! Crack! Crack!
The reanimated female corpse consecutively triggered Mirror Substitutions, finally escaping Lumian's curse.
But at this moment, Lumian directly teleported in front of her and asked with a smile, "How many Mirror Substitutions do you have left?"
As he spoke, he had already swung the Sword of Courage.
The reanimated female corpse was dazzled by that charming smile, only reacting when the Sword of Courage was near. She quickly lunged to the side.
She had no more Mirror Substitutions left!
She was fast, but Lumian was faster. His wrist paused, and the Sword of Courage cleaved the air, creating an explosive sound.
Boom!
Crimson flames burst open, directly engulfing the reanimated female corpse.
Although this explosion only had Sequence 7 power, it was enough to severely injure a Demoness without Mirror Substitutions!
Bang! The reanimated female corpse was slammed heavily against the wall, her bones breaking and blood spurting from her mouth.
Water-like waves rippled over her body, stripping away her beautiful appearance and revealing an expressionless, ordinary-looking young man.
Lumian frowned slightly and swung his sword down again.
With a rolling sound, the young man's head tumbled to the side amid a spray of blood.
His body, along with his head and the splattered blood, instantly vanished like an illusion, never to appear again.
"A deep mirror image of the real female corpse?" Lumian had seen similar gender-reversed Mirror People in Fourth Epoch Trier.
The special mirror world fragments in Franca and Jenna's possession could also create similar deep mirror images, with strength nearly perfectly replicated and certain special characteristics.
Thinking of this, Lumian suddenly raised his head, looking towards the surveillance camera obscured by smoke.
He suspected that the reanimated female corpse also had a special mirror world fragment!

...
Inside the surveillance room.
The infected Franca and Jenna were growing increasingly weak, their movements inevitably affected to some extent.
Just as the reanimated female corpse was about to seize the opportunity to destroy the surveillance screen, she suddenly felt something leap towards her from the side.
It was Ludwig, crouched like a frog.
He had emerged from the mirror world at some unknown time.
The reanimated female corpse instinctively thrust an ice crystal spear towards Ludwig.
Ludwig suddenly opened his mouth wide, his mouth corners splitting to the back of his head.
His two rows of sharp teeth then closed, biting the tip of the spear.
Immediately after, he quickly sucked in a breath through his mouth.
He completed a Deprivation through the ice crystal spear connecting him and the reanimated female corpse.
What he Deprived was the Mirror Substitution!
Currently only at Sequence 7 level, he could only Deprive one ability from the enemy, and only for one minute, so Anthony had him choose Mirror Substitution.
"Attack with full force," Anthony's voice then sounded in Franca and Jenna's ears.
Franca didn't ask why, immediately raising the Inevitable Gun, aiming at the reanimated female corpse, and pulling the trigger.
A dark yellow bullet flew out with a bang.
Sure Hit!

Chapter 919: Certain Death

The dark yellow bullet flew instantly, striking the reanimated female corpse.

However, it passed right through, merely causing the silhouette to waver, become illusory, and disappear.

After being deprived of her Mirror Substitution, the reanimated female corpse's first reaction was to use the mirrored objects in the surveillance room to create a mirror projection, supplemented by mirror illusions, while she quietly changed her position.

So, what Franca had locked onto was just the mirror projection, and what Sure Hit would hit was also just the mirror projection, not the real reanimated female corpse.

Having evaded the fatal strike, the silhouette of the reanimated female corpse immediately became ethereal, projecting onto the nearest mirrored object.

She intended to use the mirror world to temporarily leave the battlefield, wait for her Mirror Substitution ability to recover, and then decide based on the situation whether to wait for the next opportunity, attack Franca and the others again immediately, or quietly follow them to determine their identities and whereabouts, so they could be directly locked onto and kicked out of the dream.

Just as the reanimated female corpse's silhouette became prominent on the surface of that mirrored object, a person suddenly appeared in the void dark area behind the mirror.

It was Anthony, wearing a black T-shirt.

Anthony held a charm similar to the Ice Amulet in one hand and the Winter is Coming revolver in the other, aiming at the reanimated female corpse who was about to enter the mirror surface.

He had used the Mirror Traversal ability in time to intercept the reanimated female corpse!

Since Lumian could make his own charms to help Beyonders traverse the mirror world, he certainly wouldn't make just one, only for Franca.

Besides himself, everyone in the team had one, and each could be used four times!

They had relied on Franca's Ice Amulet to transfer positions earlier, partly because since everyone was close together, there was no need to waste the uses of the other charms. After all, in the dream, Lumian was restricted to the Sequence 7 level, and making similar charms again had a high probability of failure. On the other hand, it was also following Lumian's Conspirer approach and Franca's occasional mutterings after entering the dream about "appearing

weak when you are strong", deliberately setting a trap for the enemy.
By demonstrating that they could only hide in the mirror world and transfer positions by holding onto Lumian and Franca's clothes, they led the reanimated female corpse to believe that the others couldn't perform Mirror Traversal. So, after evading Franca's attack, the reanimated female corpse confidently used the mirror world to escape.
By demonstrating that they could only hide in the mirror world and transfer positions by holding onto Lumian and Franca's clothes, they led the reanimated female corpse to believe that the others couldn't perform Mirror Traversal. So, after evading Franca's attack, the reanimated female corpse confidently used the mirror world to escape.
This led her right into the gun barrel of Anthony, who had forcibly concealed his presence earlier.
Anthony pulled the trigger with a calm expression.
Another bullet tinged with a dark yellow glow flew out, heading towards the reanimated female corpse who was about to enter this area behind the mirror.
Sure Hit!
Bang!
As the gunshot rang out, the reanimated female corpse, who hadn't had time to retract her black flames, frost, and spider silk to protect herself, had blood blossoming on her chest, her flesh and bones splitting.
She was truly hit by the bullet, shot out of the mirror surface, and fell back into the surveillance room.
Seeing this, Franca aimed at the target once again.
Now, she was going to use the Certain Death bullet.
Meanwhile, Jenna still guarded the surveillance screen, having intention to steal credit, to prevent stray bullets from destroying the object that needed protection.
She only quietly extended invisible spider silk, intending to touch the blood splattered by the reanimated female corpse, to use it as a medium for curses.
At this moment, the reanimated female corpse suddenly raised her head and let out a painful scream.
Her hair rose strand by strand, instantly becoming long and thick, like venomous snakes.
The tips of this slimy, bizarre black hair were each inlaid with black and white eyeballs and heads that stuck out forked tongues like snakes.
Jenna instinctively closed her eyes, but still felt her thoughts

becoming chaotic, pain and pleasure arising simultaneously, her body inexplicably stiffening as if turning to stone.
In this instant, she suddenly understood what the enemy was doing.
The reanimated female corpse seemed to have sensed that she was about to suffer a fatal blow, and with no way to avoid it or protect herself by forming a huge cocoon, she actively indulged in her own madness, displaying an incomplete Mythical Creature form that only Saints should possess.
For most Saints, displaying an incomplete Mythical Creature form was extremely dangerous, leading to a loss of control. Unless there were no other options or they intended to drag the enemy down with them, no one would use it.
For Beyonders without godhood, directly viewing an incomplete Mythical Creature form would result in intense corruption and terrible mental shock, likely leading to madness and loss of control. Even if they didn't look directly and closed their eyes, being within range would still cause some corruption.
Saints with godhood would still be affected to some degree by the incomplete Mythical Creature form, and would continue to be affected afterwards while facing the frenzied attacks of the incomplete Mythical Creature—the incomplete Mythical Creature form was a Saint's most powerful and dangerous state.
As the horrifying transformation of the reanimated female corpse reflected in Franca's eyes, she gritted her teeth and resolutely pulled the trigger of the Inevitable Gun.
Bang!
A dull green bullet flew from the muzzle, heading straight for the reanimated female corpse's body hidden by the slimy, thick hair.
Franca then let out a painful cry.
She instinctively tilted her head back, her black hair tied in a ponytail and modified by Lie broke free from its restraints, becoming wild and distinct, seemingly growing thicker.
Her face took on a grayish-white tinge, her chest felt somewhat swollen, and her mind felt as if it had been hit by a storm, all thoughts blown about, becoming mad, twisted, and dark.
She felt intense pleasure and also extreme pain. This, combined with her body's state already infected by disease and decay forces, caused her to passively trigger a Mirror Substitution.
With a cracking sound, Franca regressed into a mirror and shattered into pieces.
But when her silhouette was outlined in the corner, while she no longer felt the effects of disease and decay, her hair still floated in mid-air, still growing thicker. Her face was extremely pale and

twisted to the extreme, yet presenting a strange beauty, her eyes full of madness and malice.
Corruption couldn't be transferred by Mirror Substitution, nor could the tendency towards losing control.
At the same time, the Certain Death bullet fired by Franca hit the mass of slimy, bizarre black hair of the "reanimated female corpse".
Although the effect of Certain Death was suppressed to Sequence 7 level, only certainly fatal to ordinary people, it was still deadly to the already severely injured reanimated female corpse. Moreover, the reanimated female corpse's incomplete Mythical Creature form was also limited to Sequence 7, only possessing defensive capabilities at this level!
The bullet glowing with a dull green light penetrated through layers of thick hair, entering the brain of the reanimated female corpse in her incomplete Mythical Creature form.
Smack!
The reanimated female corpse's head split open, blood and white matter splattering outwards.
The slimy, bizarre thick hair with black and white eyeballs fell in succession, returning to their original state to varying degrees.
Only then did Anthony dare to jump out from the mirror-like object, turning his back to the corpse with its strange charm and mental corruption. From a not-too-distant position, he began to perform Psychoanalysis on Franca, which was essentially throwing a Placate her way.
Franca's painful and mad chaotic thoughts calmed, and the symptoms of losing control in her body began to subside.
Seeing this, Anthony quietly let out a sigh of relief.
Fortunately, the reanimated female corpse's incomplete Mythical Creature form was also only at the Sequence 7 level, so the corruption and impact on Franca were at this level. Otherwise, he really wouldn't have known if she could be saved; that might have depended on Franca's own willpower.
As Anthony began the second Placate, Lumian jumped out of the surveillance screen.
He instinctively looked towards Franca and Jenna, checking their conditions.
Seeing that the problems were all within an acceptable range, Lumian then turned his gaze to the reanimated female corpse on the ground with its split head and bizarre hair.
As a fellow Saint, he only experienced a slight emotional fluctuation, without any other reaction.
Their joint efforts had actually taken down a Demoness of Despair

with Mirror Substitution... Lumian was surprised and quite gratified.
He unconsciously looked towards Ludwig, finding that the little boy was staring at the Demoness's corpse with blazing eyes, completely unconcerned about possibly being corrupted.
Indeed, Ludwig wouldn't be affected by the incomplete Mythical Creature form. Moreover, the corpse had already left the incomplete Mythical Creature form, with only some characteristics remaining.
While repeatedly creating seven clusters at a time of deep black Flames of Destruction to burn the patches of viscous flesh and yellow-green pus in the surveillance room, Lumian took out a mirror, bent down, and put the reanimated female corpse with its burst head inside.
They couldn't let this corpse continue to corrupt the surveillance room, affecting Jenna and Franca who were recovering!
During this process, a black, irregularly shaped mirror fragment fell from the corpse.
As expected, she has a fragment of a special mirror world... Lumian stuffed the black fragment into the Traveler's Bag, planning to compare it with Franca's and the others' later.
By this time, about a third of the viscous flesh and yellow-green pus in the surveillance room had caught fire, and the black flames began to spread to the surroundings, seeking other combustible materials.
"Phew..." Franca let out a long breath, her mental state finally stabilizing, the abnormalities on her body having subsided.
Anthony moved to Jenna's side, performing Psychoanalysis on her, who had not been much corrupted.
After putting the Inevitable Gun back into the Traveler's Bag, Franca was about to proudly tell Lumian "We took down a Demoness of Despair" when her eyes suddenly caught sight of the several cameras in the surveillance room.
She immediately changed her words. "I'll check if our fight just now was caught on the cameras."
"Couldn't we just completely destroy the surveillance equipment with the Flames of Destruction?" Lumian thought it wasn't necessary to be so troublesome.
"What if this mall's surveillance footage is stored on a cloud server?" Franca wasn't too sure, but felt it necessary to guard against this possibility.
Lumian didn't stop Franca further, because he didn't understand what a cloud server was.
Franca quickly manipulated the surveillance system, and after a

while said, "It's fine, the reanimated female corpse probably destroyed the cameras in this room when she came to check the surveillance."
As she spoke, she used another Mirror Substitution, because Lumian couldn't make the entire room be engulfed by the Flames of Destruction. He could only create clusters of flames and burn areas bit by bit, with mystical pathogens and decay forces still lingering in the air.
Lumian nodded and continued, "Check if my battle in the surveillance world has become part of the surveillance footage. If there's no problem, let's hurry back for the spirit channeling."
"Can it work like that?" Franca said in surprise.
This was equivalent to the actions of a dummy in a painted world changing the painting itself.

Chapter 920: Like Reality

Following Lumian's suggestion, Franca quickly reviewed the surveillance footage from the 4th floor of the mall in the past three minutes.

During this process, Jenna and Anthony hid in the area being burned by the Flames of Destruction, to avoid the remaining mystical pathogens and decay forces.

The former also had clusters of quiet black flames flare up in other parts of the surveillance room, assisting Lumian in eliminating necessary traces, though she could only create six to seven clusters at a time.

Taking advantage of the fact that he still had an unused Mirror Substitution, Ludwig took the opportunity to eat some snacks—the flesh and blood carrying mystical pathogens and decay forces.

Soon, Franca pulled up the corresponding surveillance footage.

The scene, which should have been dark, quiet, and empty, now showed two figures engaged in a fierce battle, with red flames quickly igniting the area and dense smoke billowing up.

However, the fighting scene and the original background seemed somewhat out of sync, as if forcibly edited in with outdated special effects technology. Both Lumian and his opponent's figures were quite blurred, showing signs of interference.

"Your battle in the surveillance world did become part of the surveillance footage, but nothing like that actually happened in the real world, the 4th floor of the mall is perfectly fine..." Franca pulled up the current camera feed from the 4th floor to make the comparison.

She took a deep breath and said, "Wh— The surveillance world is clearly not just the mirror world, it has the characteristics of an information world as well..."

"The pathway good at summoning should also have some understanding of parallel spaces and illusory worlds." Franca half-turned her body and said, "This surveillance footage can't be used by the police and Celestial Immortal's subordinates to recreate your image, so we don't need to deliberately destroy the surveillance equipment."

Lumian nodded slightly and added, "Our mystical knowledge of parallel spaces and illusory worlds is still quite superficial. The abilities, authorities, and knowledge in this area seem to be scattered across Demonesses, Mystery Pryers, Apprentices, Painters and other pathways, with Apprentices being the main line, and I'm not sure if the Painter pathway can match Apprentices."

"The pathway good at summoning should also have some

understanding of parallel spaces and illusory worlds." Franca half-turned her body and said, "This surveillance footage can't be used by the police and Celestial Immortal's subordinates to recreate your image, so we don't need to deliberately destroy the surveillance equipment."
At this point, with Jenna's assistance, Lumian had already erased the various traces they had left in the surveillance room, and Franca also began to use the Demoness's black flames to clean up the fingerprints she had left on the equipment.
"Let's head back, we need to hurry with the spirit channeling." Lumian withdrew his gaze.
"Okay." Franca retracted her hand covered in black flames.
Lumian immediately led his teammates back through the mirror world to the rented car, and as soon as Franca fastened her seatbelt, preparing to start the engine, she suddenly shivered.
She began to feel cold, as if all the heat in her body had been drained away. Her head became dizzy, her vision occasionally darkening and sparking with golden stars, almost fainting.
Franca understood that this was the negative effect of the Inevitable Gun—if the Certain Death and Sure Hit effects were triggered, the user would inevitably fall gravely ill, and without effective treatment, could even die. Even if treated, the severe illness would persist for some time.
Similarly, every time Anthony used the Winter is Coming revolver, he had to find an Apothecary or Doctor for treatment, otherwise he would contract an intractable disease that Low- to Mid-Sequence Beyonders were powerless against.
Seeing Franca's face turn nearly transparent, Lumian reached into the Traveler's Bag and took out two vials of healing agents.
These were supply resources provided by the Tarot Club, reportedly extremely rare items not sold publicly, produced by The Fool Pharmaceutical Company.
For this mission, the Major Arcana card holders had given Lumian's group a total of twenty-five general-purpose healing agents, with the majority kept with Lumian as the team leader, while Jenna, Franca, and Anthony each carried two, but Ludwig had none.
Children needed supervision, otherwise he would secretly drink them all!
Franca's trembling hands opened the cap of the healing agent and gulped it down.
The icy liquid slid down her throat and into her stomach.
Soon, the chilled feeling rapidly disappeared, and a light sweat broke out on her skin.

"Much better..." Franca exhaled, "Just a bit dizzy in the head, my forehead is a bit hot, and my body feels weak."
Anthony, who had yet to suffer symptoms, had also finished his healing agent.
"I'll drive." Lumian said.
"You can, can drive?" Franca really didn't feel confident in her current state to be driving, but Lumian, who had never learned, made her even more worried. "Should we just take a taxi?"
Lumian chuckled. "I carefully observed you driving today, I've basically mastered the basic operations. And now it's late at night, there aren't many cars.
"And more importantly, I also have the driver's license that Madam Justice gave."
"Alright, Li Ming." Franca weakly unbuckled her seatbelt and pushed open the door.
Li Ming was Lumian's alias in the dream world.
As soon as Franca's feet touched the ground, her knees buckled, nearly causing her to fall. Luckily, Lumian was waiting outside the driver's seat and quickly grabbed her arm.
"So this is what being severely ill feels like... and this is with the negative effects suppressed to Sequence 7..." Franca leaned on Lumian as she slowly walked to the passenger seat, muttering while preparing to provide guidance later.
Lumian chuckled."If this were the real world, I'd probably have to carry you."
Franca imagined such a scene and suddenly said, "No, let's go with a piggyback ride!"
Lumian glanced at her but didn't say anything further.
Jenna, who had already come out of the passenger side, looked at the two approaching, her gaze slightly dark but also with a hint of relief as she listened to their conversation.
After everyone was seated and the doors closed, Franca gave a simple explanation,
"This is the steering wheel, you turn it in the direction you want to go. This is the accelerator, to control the speed. This is the brake, to stop the car or decelerate in an emergency... Basically, don't overtake, change lanes only when there are no other cars, stop at red lights, go at green, turn when you need to... It's very simple with an automatic transmission..."
Lumian stepped on the brake, released the parking brake, and shifted the lever to the appropriate gear.
The gray sedan slowly started moving, gradually picking up speed.
After passing two traffic light intersections, Lumian already had a very skilled driving technique.

Franca looked at him with her mouth slightly open, weakly saying, "You've learned it just like that?
No need for me to guide you on the side?
"It's very simple." Lumian chuckled, using Franca's own words to respond.
He then released one hand, pointing to his head. "You have to trust the spatial awareness and hand-eye coordination of a Hunter."
Franca suddenly felt that being the one who could drive in the team was no longer something to be proud of.
In this way, Lumian successfully drove the car back to the rented old neighborhood, and then, with Jenna's guidance, after spending quite some time, finally parked the car, allowing Franca to feel proud again.
They had rented an older model car to save money, without any parking assist systems.
Back in the rental unit, Lumian led the team into the mirror containing the reanimated female corpse.
Except for Lumian and Ludwig, the others didn't dare to look closely, fearing new corruption, but even with just a brief glance, they all noticed that a faint dark glow was slowly emanating from the decrepit corpse, gradually converging towards the right eye.
"Evocation of Beyonder characteristics?" Jenna blurted out.
Franca, being weaker, was a step slower in her reaction, saying in amazement, "This dream is too realistic!"
Beyonders will also evoke their characteristics?
Before Lumian and the others could respond, Franca had a sudden idea.
"If I obtain Beyonder characteristics in this dream, concoct them into a potion, and perform a ritual to drink them, will I be able to successfully advance in the real world?"
At this question, the area behind the mirror fell into an unusual silence.
"I can't answer that for you." Lumian pondered for a few seconds. "Maybe you should consult the Major Arcana card holders, or take these Beyonder characteristics and exit the dream to see if it 'follows' you to reality."
After arriving in this city, Lumian's group no longer needed Madam Justice's help to exit and re-enter the dream. They could simply take the train, and use lucky coins to complete the task directly.
"Frequent entering and exiting of the dream might also draw the attention of the Celestial Immortal," Anthony reminded Lumian.
Lumian offered a curt acknowledgment.
"There are other ways, let's try to avoid exiting as much as

possible. We'll contact the Major Arcana card holders early tomorrow morning."
Although the Major Arcana card holders were subject to various restrictions in the dream, with some unable to even enter this place, there were still ways to communicate through the dream.
As they were talking, the dark Beyonder characteristics had gathered in the reanimated female corpse's right eye, dyeing it a blackish-blue hue.
During this process, Lumian, Franca, and Jenna—the three Demonesses—had already created multiple clusters of black flames to incinerate the corpse and the mystical pathogens spread from the characteristics.
According to the Demoness of Despair's potion formula, Lumian collected the black eyeball, the corpse's bile, and a strand of the coarse, partially restored gray-white hair, and handed them to Franca to put in the Traveler's Bag.
Having endured all this time, Ludwig finally found an opportunity, pointing at the corpse and asking, "Can I have a few bites?"
He had already obtained the Mirror Substitution ability through Deprivation, and by eating a few more pieces of the corpse's flesh and blood, he would have a chance to permanently fix this ability to himself.
Of course, limited by the dream and the current Sequence 7 level of Deprivation, he could only use Mirror Substitution for two to three weeks, unable to gain it permanently.
"Go ahead." Lumian nodded.
Ludwig excitedly ran over, crouching next to the corpse's head, targeting the delicate, small ear.
"After her death, the Demoness's charm is concentrated in the ear, to the point that even Ludwig is attracted?" Lumian had just had this thought when he saw Ludwig lean down and bite off the ear with a crunch, chewing it noisily, his mouth covered in blood.
"..." Franca and the others fell silent, turning their bodies away, no longer looking.
After Ludwig finished eating both of the Demoness's ears, reluctantly returning to Jenna's side, Lumian began to set up the ritual.
Due to the lack of a subject to pray to, he could only perform the spirit channeling in the simplest way, carefully guarding against the strong corruption from the Celestial Immortal on the target.
Soon, the vague silhouette of the female corpse appeared.
Lumian asked in a deep voice,"What were you trying to do, waking up in the morgue of Mushu Hospital?"

Chapter 921: Character Script

The pale-faced ghostly figure of the female corpse replied in a wavering voice, "To forge a good identity, pass the Intis Group's interview, and become an employee of the company and a colleague of Zhou Mingrui.

"Interacting with Zhou Mingrui daily, starting off polite and distant, then gradually getting familiar, subtly seducing him in our daily interactions until he falls in love with me.

"I will become his girlfriend, and in the future, enter the marital hall with him. Through prosperity or adversity, wealth or poverty, health or sickness, whether he is male or female, I will always accompany him, never leaving, forever and ever."

Listening with a slightly agape mouth, the sickly Franca gradually felt bewildered.

Isn't this character script a bit off?

This is neither an urban fantasy nor a suspense-horror, it's turned into a pure romance novel...

Is this intended to immerse Mr. Fool in a blissful, sweet love life and a peaceful, warm urban environment, unwilling to wake up?

Is the Celestial Worthy being this down-to-earth?

Is this a large-scale Truman Show for Mr. Fool, isolating him from reality?

When she heard the part about "whether he is male or female", Franca suddenly snapped awake.

There is a conspiracy here!

There are sinister plots hidden within, with another purpose!

Lumian and Franca had similar thoughts, but Franca's mind was more active. Lumian was more concerned about another aspect.

The task of the reanimated female corpse did not include inducing Mr. Fool to drink the Witch potion. Does this mean someone else is responsible for turning Mr. Fool into a Demoness?

At this point, Franca quietly said, "The method in the script does seem feasible... To influence Mr. Fool, or Zhou Mingrui, a person so cautious and careful, the only way is to work on 'falling in love over time', only through the calm, genuine, day-by-day interaction can connections and trust be built.

"And for this kind of task, the most suitable executor is indeed a Demoness, secondly a Baby Cupid. No wonder they need to revive or awaken this female corpse, Charm can blend into many little details of daily life without being detected..."

"Indeed, following Madam Susie's reminder, we also seem to be able to only gain Mr. Fool's trust through similar means, only we don't need to use Charm, but then the risk of exposure would be

too great." Jenna weighed her words in agreement.
Prolonged, repeated contact with Mr. Fool would easily be noticed by the Celestial Worthy.
Lumian did not respond to Franca and Jenna. He needed to hurry up with the spirit channeling.
Looking at the floating female corpse illusion, he carefully asked, "Are you a marionette?"
Lumian had not experienced the battle with the female corpse's physical body, the two disease bombs' explosions, or the discussion about a Marionettist with Franca and the others, so at the time he did not search the 30-40 meter area around the surveillance room to see if there were any Beyonders hiding, until on the way back in the car, after exchanging details of the battle with his teammates, did he consider the possibility of a marionette.
However, not actively searching the 30-40 meter area around the surveillance room did not mean he was not wary of other enemies lurking nearby—that was a basic quality of a Hunter. At the time, he simply did not detect anyone hiding in the vicinity.
This made him uncertain about Franca and the others' suspicions. Their doubts might not be true, just as the reanimated female corpse did not have powers granted by the Door pathway.
The ghostly female corpse with its sinister black hair replied in a hollow voice, "Yes."
Yes? She's really a marionette? Lumian was stunned for a moment, then urgently asked, "Who is your manipulator, and where are they?"
This time, the female corpse illusion did not respond, but slowly raised her head, gazing towards the vast, dark "sky" of the mirror realm.
Lumian and the others may have been influenced by the remnant spirit of the corpse, or perhaps stimulated by the change in the mystical environment caused by this action, and they actually experienced a slight hallucination.
Vaguely, they seemed to see ethereal, dense threads emerging from the corpse's body, extending upwards towards the heights, and similar illusory threads floating from their own bodies too, also drifting up into the dark, cloud-shrouded night sky.
They also seemed to see the individuals in the city, each of them sprouting numerous, dense illusory threads, connecting to somewhere in the night sky where the moon and stars were obscured by clouds.
Lumian was greatly shocked in both mind and spirit by this scene, but his observational abilities as a Hunter still allowed him to notice one detail.

The illusory threads emerging from themselves and the female corpse had a fairly obvious difference: theirs floated and swayed, as if only attracted and drawn towards some unseen thing high above, without actually deeply integrating into the darkness, while the female corpse's threads were taut, seeming to merge into the unfathomable blackness.
As for the threads of the other people in the city, Lumian could only vaguely sense them, unable to see them clearly.
Combining the currently available information on The Fool pathway provided by the Major Arcana card holders, Lumian, Franca, Jenna, and Anthony immediately came to the same judgment: the heights represented Mr. Fool, as well as the Celestial Worthy, and the resurrected female corpse was the Celestial Worthy's marionette!
"No wonder we couldn't find the Marionettist controlling her in the vicinity..." Jenna had just had this thought when she quickly realized a problem. "No, that can't be right! If it were like that, we would have already been locked on to by the Celestial Worthy and kicked out of the dream, and even if we weren't kicked out, we would definitely be under restrictions..."
Shifting gears, Jenna came up with a possibility, "The Celestial Worthy is also in a slumbering state, largely in a dazed, unconscious condition, controlling the marionette, only becoming aware of the corresponding situation when stimulated or when the marionette actively reports back.
"But can an unconsciously controlled marionette exhibit the kind of behavior we saw earlier? Apart from being a bit extreme, obsessed with dealing with us, not leaving in advance, the reanimated female corpse is no different from the real person..."
At this moment, the female corpse illusion began to fade, about to disappear.
The spirit channeling was almost over.
Grasping the last bit of time, Lumian asked in an urgent tone, "Who gave you humanity?"
Jenna immediately understood that Lumian had the same thoughts as her.
He was also very curious about the humanized behavior of the reanimated female corpse or marionette!
The pale-faced female corpse illusion grew fainter and fainter, only the empty voice echoing, "It was Mr. Fool and the Great Mother..."
"Ah?" In her weakened state, Franca's self-control slipped, the exclamation escaping her lips.
This sounded as if Mr. Fool and the 'Great Mother had given birth

to her, like she was their child...
Lumian ended the spirit channeling and turned to his teammates, saying thoughtfully, "I think I can understand the meaning of that last sentence.
"She should have previously made contact with Mr. Fool or one of his incarnations, a Demoness of Despair. Mr. Fool's subconscious would instinctively weave an identity, appearance and personality for her based on the image in his memory, and with the Great Mother's awakening, or rather, giving her new life, she naturally acquired humanity and became a unique marionette capable of autonomous action according to the mission assignment.
"The Oracle's corpse being sent to the Mushu Hospital morgue is also to create a similar marionette?
"Does Mushu Hospital not only have the Mother Tree of Desire, but also the presence of the Great Mother?"
"I knew it!" Franca had wanted to clap her hands, but after raising them, she had no strength left. "Mushu Hospital may also have the power of the Order of All Extinction."
Turning his gaze to the tattered yet enchanting female corpse, Lumian observed for a few seconds and said, "No powers from the Door pathway dissipating, nor any decay boons dissipating..."
"I don't know how they did it... She didn't show any corresponding abilities in the battle, were those two disease bombs pre-made with some kind of tool? Too bad we didn't get to ask about the marionette transformation of one of the disease bombs..." Franca grew increasingly fearful of Mushu Hospital.
She didn't even dare imagine what Lumian would have encountered if he had gone down to the B1 of Mushu Hospital!
Searching the body, Lumian found no other items, then stood up and said to Ludwig, "If you promise to listen to Jenna's orders from now on, I'll reward you with this corpse!"
"Okay, I promise!" Ludwig had a completely carefree expression, not caring at all about the future.
Lumian's true purpose was actually to destroy the body and eliminate any trace, as this was the Celestial Worthy's marionette. It had to be completely destroyed before the Celestial Worthy's intermittent awakening, leaving no evidence to avoid drawing attention and anomalies.
Seeing Ludwig rush towards the female corpse, Jenna supported the sickly Franca, and along with Anthony, quickly exited the mirror realm and returned to the rental unit.
Standing beside Ludwig, Lumian asked in a flat tone, "If this corpse is real, would you be able to restore to Sequence 4 after eating it?"
"No, unless you give me the other one too." Ludwig looked at

Lumian with longing.
He was referring to Voisin Sanson's body. A few days ago, he had received an arm as a reward for his good performance in studying, exams, and homework, so he had fully recovered to the Sequence 5 Depriver level before entering the dream.
Ignoring Ludwig's plea, Lumian asked instead, "What is your Sequence 4 called?"
Ludwig began gnawing on an arm, answering in a muffled voice, "Sea Monster."
...
The next morning, Franca found that her severe illness had not yet recovered. Her forehead still felt feverish; her body weak, and she almost couldn't get out of bed.
Lumian used the simplest Magic Mirror Divination method to confirm that this was just the lingering effect of the negative effect, and she would be ill for about half a day, not because the healing agent had not worked as it should. He then told Jenna, "We'll take turns. You take care of her and Ludwig in the morning, I'll do it in the afternoon.
"Now I'll drive with Anthony to contact the Major Arcana card holders."
"Okay." Jenna had also been somewhat corrupted the night before and needed more rest as well.
Downstairs, getting into the car, Lumian, mimicking Franca, placed his phone on a specially bought holder and opened the navigation app.
Then, under Anthony's gaze, he used voice input to enter the destination: "Star Dream Provisions Store."

Chapter 922: News

In the rental apartment.

Jenna cleaned up the table, picked up the soy milk and meat buns she had specially left for Franca, and said to Ludwig beside her, "You can start studying now."

Ludwig's expression changed a few times before he argued, "What's the point of me studying?

"If you want to gain knowledge, eat scientists. If you want to gain abilities, eat Beyonders!"

Jenna smiled faintly and said, "Studying may not be important for you, but it's very important for us that you study."

"..." Ludwig, already inarticulate, was left completely speechless by Jenna's frankness.

After some consideration, Jenna added, "Although we don't know the exact process, and you've probably forgotten too, the fact that you were sealed by the Church of Knowledge is as solid as steel. And what's the biggest difference between you and the clergy of the Church of Knowledge? It's the attitude towards learning!"

Ludwig was left feeling a bit confused. Reluctantly but resignedly, he sat down at the table and opened his textbook.

Jenna returned to the master bedroom, casually closing the door behind her.

Franca struggled to sit up halfway, stuffing a pillow behind her back, and said in a low voice, "You're deceiving Ludwig again. Trying to defeat the Church of Knowledge through studying is like competing against them on their home turf, under their favorite rules. How can we win that way? The best approach is to play to our own strengths.

"Hehe, Demonesses are indeed supposed to be good at deceiving people."

Many Demonesses had experience deceiving others' feelings to digest the Witch potion, and some of them even became emotionally invested themselves, ultimately having to force themselves to separate. So they also had their share of pain.

Jenna laughed. "We have to give him some reason, and he's just looking for a reason too."

Jenna paused, then said thoughtfully, "Besides, I think studying does have an effect on Ludwig. You saw him during last night's battle—he was completely monstrous. But in our daily interactions, I feel that apart from his ability to eat, love of eating, and need to eat, he's just like a normal little boy in every other way.

"This is partly due to the Church of Knowledge's seal, but it's also

likely because he's learned rules, morals, and common sense about human society through studying."
As she spoke, Jenna brought the plastic cup of soy milk to Franca's lips, letting her take a sip, then handed her the meat bun, watching as she bit into it until she reached the filling.
Franca had never enjoyed such treatment before, and her heart was instantly filled with warmth.
She nodded thoughtfully. "You mean studying is one of the ways for Ludwig to integrate into human society? That studying has given him some humanity?"
"Yup." Jenna continued to feed Franca her breakfast while casually chatting with her. At the end, she even used a wet wipe to clean Franca's mouth and washed her face.
After finishing these tasks, Jenna took the trash and left the master bedroom.
After bustling about for several dozen seconds, she sat down next to Ludwig, as if supervising a child's study.
After watching for a while, she took out two packages from the Traveler's Bag and placed them on the table.
They were two bags of simply packaged rice crisps.
As Ludwig looked over in surprise, Jenna said with a smile, "If you can pass my test later, these will be yours.
"Do you prefer spicy or original flavor?"
"I like both!" Ludwig lowered his head again, his gaze unusually focused.
"I prefer the original flavor." Jenna tore open the packaging and popped two pieces into her mouth, chewing.
Ludwig's head snapped up to look at her, his mouth half-open, expression bewildered.
Isn't this my reward?
"I'll eat a bit while you're studying. Don't worry, I'll save some for you," Jenna said with a smile.
Franca, lying on the bed in the master bedroom, couldn't help but laugh when she heard this conversation.
She suddenly realized that although Jenna usually seemed very mature, she was actually just a girl fresh out of college by her real age. It was perfectly normal for such a girl to enjoy snacks, and now she finally had the opportunity.
The smile on Franca's face gradually softened as new dialogue drifted in from the living room outside.
"This is a corn soup flavored puffed snack."
"These are cucumber flavored potato chips."
"These are chocolate wafer cookies."
"..."

"These snacks aren't plentiful because they're not as cheap as staple foods, but they're all prepared for you, as rewards for studying hard and doing well on tests."
"You... you eat less! I'll work hard!"
Leaning against the pillow, Franca slowly developed a strange feeling: She was the sick father, and outside were the gluttonous, study-averse child and the mother supervising the child's homework.
If one ignored phrases like "the corpse's finger is also your reward for today," it was really such a warm and beautiful day-to-day life for a family of three.
...
Beep! Beep! Beep!
The sound of horns blared constantly behind and beside the gray sedan, urging Lumian to drive faster, but Lumian remained calm and completely ignored the noise around him, keeping the vehicle moving steadily at the lowest speed allowed on the current road section.
As a new driver—safety first!
Anthony sat in the passenger seat, constantly scrolling through his phone, looking at local news.
"What are you looking for?" Lumian glanced at his companion out of the corner of his eye.
Anthony shouldn't have reached the stage of being addicted to the Internet yet; after all, he had only just learned how to use it.
Anthony turned his head and said solemnly, "I still feel that several details from last night's battle seem increasingly odd the more I think about them."
"Such as?" Lumian focused on driving.
Anthony said carefully, "The second security guard who self-destructed, his state before the explosion was very similar to that of a Marionettist himself, but he just exploded like that."
"The ability to swap positions between a marionette and its master? You suspect that there was indeed a demigod-level Marionettist assisting the Celestial Worthy's marionette at the scene?" Lumian understood what Anthony was trying to express. "But we were aware of the situation within a range of several dozen meters and found no traces. Could it be that this demigod-level Marionettist was in a state where we couldn't see, hear, or touch them?"
"That's the most terrifying part. And if there really was such a Marionettist present, why didn't he save the reanimated female corpse afterward, and why hasn't he spread information about our appearances and characteristics since then?" Anthony returned his

gaze to his phone.
Lumian nodded slowly and replied, "You're scrolling through reports and private rumors related to last night's incident, checking if any of our information has leaked?"
"Yes," Anthony said, his finger constantly sliding across the screen. "The current circulating story is that workplace conflicts led one of the security guards to bring in detonators, killing his colleague and himself in the explosion..."
Anthony stopped mid-sentence.
He frowned slightly.
"I've come across a strange local news item. This morning, a madman was found near the garbage collection point close to Moon Plaza, a completely irrational madman unable to communicate. Then, he was sent to the hospital for treatment."
"Near the mall? A madman?" Lumian also noticed the oddity of this news and keenly asked, "Which hospital was he sent to?"
Could this madman be the Marionettist who was hidden last night? Did he not intervene in the later battle because something happened to him?
What happened? Why did something happen?
"The news doesn't say," Anthony continued scrolling through reports on this matter.
Lumian maintained his speed and took another ten minutes or so to reach their destination.
After finding a parking spot and struggling to park the car, he and Anthony walked towards Star Dream Provisions Store located at the corner of the street.
The shop had no lights on, and it was narrow and dim inside. The moment Lumian entered, it felt like he had gone from morning to night.
He glanced at the tall, long shelves on both sides filled with peculiar goods, and walked to the cashier counter at the very back.
Behind the counter sat a woman wearing a black dress. She leaned against the wooden cabinet behind her, head lowered as she played with her phone. In front of her was a tablet playing a TV series.
Lumian politely said, "Hello, I'd like to send a letter."
He was actually saying he wanted to send a letter in a provisions store.
The woman in the black dress playing with her phone didn't find it strange. Without raising her head, she asked, "Where to, and to whom?"
"To the Cathedral of Serenity, to High-ranking Deacon Leonard Mitchell," Lumian took out the letter for the Major Arcana card

holders.
The woman in the black dress still looked at her phone, her voice gentle and calming as she said, "There's a silver-rimmed black mailbox on the third shelf to the right. You can put your letter in there.
"Come back tomorrow to collect the reply."
"Thank you," Lumian quietly sighed in relief and turned towards the shelf.
What caught his eye wasn't a toy mailbox, but a brass-like book and a silver mirror with black pupil-like orbs on both sides.
Lumian quickly scanned the shelves and also found classic quill pens, various strange dice, and other items. If it weren't for the shop owner being on her phone and watching a tablet, he would have thought he had returned to the real world, back to Trier.
The style of these items was quite different from the dream city, more like things from the Northern Continent!
After placing the letter in the silver-rimmed toy mailbox, Lumian turned to the side and asked the shop owner, "May I look at the goods here?"
The shop owner's voice carried a hint of amusement. "These are all for sale."
For sale? As a Demoness, Lumian first picked up the silver mirror with ancient patterns and a black gem on each side.
In the mirror, Lumian's face quickly appeared.
Light blue eyes, clear and deep, a slightly thin face, almost perfect, lips neither thick nor thin, pale in color yet moist, with a hint of radiance...
This was his female form.
It directly shows my Demoness state... This mirror indeed has magical properties... Just as Lumian had this thought, he saw the surface of the mirror ripple like water, outlining rows of blood-colored words in ancient Feysac: "I am the great Arrodes. I can answer any question you ask, but you must also answer an equal number of questions from me, in the presence of at least one witness.
"If you refuse to answer, or if you lie, you will face punishment."
Arrodes, the great Arrodes? Lumian knew this name.
Franca had mentioned it before. This was Mr. Fool's magic mirror, most accurate in answering questions, but each of its questions would cause the diviner to suffer social death.
Mr. Fool's magic mirror is actually in this provisions store in the dream? *What does this represent, what does it symbolize?* Lumian couldn't help but glance again at the shop owner, the woman in the black dress playing with her phone.

After brief consideration, Lumian calmly said, "My question is, regarding the matter of awakening Mr. Fool, what do you want to warn us about?"

Chapter 923: Prices

The surface of the magic mirror claiming to be Arrodes rippled with aqueous light, and the surrounding darkness became hazy.

One by one, ancient Feysac words that seemed to be dripping blood quickly appeared on the mirror: "Beware of the night."

Beware of the night? Lumian repeated this answer while instinctively looking outside the Star Dream Provisions Store.

At this time, the August sunlight was bright and brilliant, reflecting golden light off many glass windows across the street, unconsciously making people feel certain and secure, while also instinctively dreading the heat.

Lumian quickly recalled his experiences of the past two nights, realizing that neither night had been peaceful: The first night, the dream image of Oracle Danitz was murdered, and the orderly at Mushu Hospital revived the corpse of a Demoness of Despair;

The second night, they encountered the reanimated female corpse in the monitoring room, a fierce battle ensued, and they nearly made the local news headlines as a major case involving guns, explosives, and biochemical toxins. Fortunately, to avoid causing panic, the police did not disclose specific details and only launched a secret investigation.

In comparison, nothing major had happened during the two daytimes. The only anomaly was the revival of the Oracle's corpse, which had walked into Mushu Hospital without causing much commotion.

Daytime is relatively safe, while night is more dangerous? During the day, Mr. Fool's power is dominant, while at night, the Celestial Worthy's consciousness is more active? Lumian briefly analyzed the answer from the magic mirror Arrodes.

At this point, the blood-colored words on the silver mirror's surface twisted and writhed to form new content: "Based on the principle of reciprocity, it's my turn to ask a question.

"If you answer incorrectly or lie, you will be punished."

Lumian nodded fearlessly, while Anthony beside him remained silent.

On the magic mirror, new words began to form one by one: "Regarding your sister Aurore..."

Lumian's eyebrows suddenly twitched, and at the same time, the words on the mirror's surface suddenly blurred, rearranging into new content: "After becoming a Demoness, do you want to be fucked by men?"

"No," Lumian answered briefly and decisively.

No punishment appeared.

Lumian murmured in confusion, "The question is so simple?"
First, it suddenly changed the question, then asked one that he currently had a clear conscience about. *How could this create social death?*
On the mirror's surface, waves of light floated, and several lines of ancient Feysac words that seemed to be dripping blood appeared:
"The great Arrodes is very friendly to everyone who enters the dream and wants to awaken Mr. Fool!"
I see... This magic mirror is very loyal... Just as Lumian finished this thought, he saw the words on the mirror change: "Based on the principle of reciprocity, it's my turn to ask a question.
"If you answer incorrectly or lie, you will be punished."
That also counted as a question? Lumian hadn't expected his mutterings to become a question.
He hadn't even demanded that the magic mirror Arrodes answer!
On the surface of the antique silver mirror, a bloody question appeared before Lumian's eyes:
"What does it feel like to wear women's underwear?"
Still quite friendly indeed... Lumian answered expressionlessly, "Constricting, a bit tight, not very comfortable, but it gives a sense of stability and security."
Considering that the magic mirror Arrodes had only answered "Beware of the night" for the first question, Lumian felt that asking more questions now wouldn't yield much more information. So he put the antique silver mirror with black eye-like gems on both sides back in its original place.
He thoughtfully looked towards the cashier counter and asked the shop owner, "How much is this mirror?"
If the price was right, perhaps he could buy it. As Mr. Fool's personal item, the magic mirror might provide important information at crucial moments later on.
The shop owner in the black dress finally raised her head.
For some reason, Lumian felt the sunlight outside suddenly dim a little, as if large clouds had drifted by.
The interior of Star Dream Provisions Store became even darker.
In this environment, Lumian, with his Night Vision, could still clearly see the shop owner's appearance.
Her eyes were a rare pure black, her face extraordinarily beautiful, but she didn't look like a local.
The shop owner smiled and answered Lumian's question, "5 million."
"How much?" Lumian blurted out, and even Anthony's expression changed slightly.
"5 million," the shop owner repeated the price.

I have to think twice even about spending 50 now, and you're quoting me 5 million... Lumian abandoned the idea of buying the magic mirror Arrodes.
He knew that this price was actually very cheap. This was Mr. Fool's personal item, the great Arrodes, its true value definitely worth 5 million, or even far exceeding this price, but one had to allow those without money to grumble a bit.
With an attitude of gaining knowledge, Lumian pointed to the brass-like book. "How much is this?"
"9 million," the shop owner answered politely.
Lumian couldn't ask further.
He now only knew one thing, this brass book was more valuable than the magic mirror Arrodes!
The shop owner added with a smile, "Most of the items in the store are antiques, and related to mysticism, so they're not cheap. But you can choose to rent them, calculated by the day."
"Rent?" Lumian pointed at the magic mirror Arrodes in surprise. "How much to rent for one day?"
"220,000," the shop owner's voice was as gentle as a serenade.
220,000... This isn't much different from buying it for 5 million, we can't afford it either way... Lumian first grumbled to himself, then based on his rich dream experience and a Demoness's spiritual intuition, he muttered softly, "Saving up 5 million to buy the magic mirror, and saving up 220,000 to rent it for a day, both have corresponding symbolic meanings?"
The shop owner didn't seem to expect Lumian to rent or purchase, and lowered her head again to focus on her phone.
Lumian indeed didn't have the ability to rent or buy now, so he and Anthony walked towards the door of Star Dream Provisions Store.
After a few steps, he suddenly thought of something and turned back to ask, "Has anyone rented the magic mirror before?"
The shop owner raised her head again, a smile appearing on her beautiful face. "Yes."
Lumian's pupils suddenly dilated. "Who?"
Someone really rented the magic mirror Arrodes in the dream city?
What did they use it for?
The shop owner answered with a faint smile, "It's my duty to keep my clients' privacy and secrets."
In Lumian's mind, thoughts flashed like lightning.
He finally didn't pursue the question further and turned to walk out of Star Dream Provisions Store.
Just as they approached where they had parked, Lumian and

Anthony saw a foreign man with brownish-yellow hair crouching beside the gray sedan their team had rented, looking left and right, occasionally taking a photo.
Seeing the car owners return, this foreign man slowly stood up.
He was about the same height as Lumian, wearing a pair of plain glasses on his nose bridge, with some light yellow stubble on his face. His chest muscles were developed, his arms were thick, stretching his blue shirt to near bursting point. He wore faded jeans and carried a black travel backpack on his back.
"Why are you photographing our car?" Lumian asked cautiously.
He now had a kind of illness where he felt that every person in the dream had a corresponding identity and symbolic meaning.
The foreign man said, "Such a vintage car is rare to see; it fills a gap in my knowledge."
"Knowledge?" Lumian asked puzzledly.
Is this guy studying cars?
The foreign man smiled and said, "I'm an international student, studying at the university here. I really like this city, I like everything here, so when I don't have classes, I carry my bag and phone, walk around and take photos everywhere, recording every detail that makes up this civilization."
"I see..." Lumian felt this guy was a bit strange, but as he was still in the first stage of observation, he didn't want to have too much contact with him.
At this point, Anthony suddenly asked, "What's your name?"
The foreign man glanced at Anthony and smiled as he answered, "Stiano. What about you guys?"
"Li Ming," Lumian gave his fake name for the dream city.
Anthony also introduced himself, "An Ruide."
After chatting for a few more sentences, Stiano, this foreign man, continued to wander aimlessly with his backpack and phone.
Once in the car, Lumian fastened his seatbelt and looked at Anthony.
"Why did you ask for his name?"
Anthony rarely took such initiative.
Anthony thought for a moment and said, "He gives me a strange sense of familiarity.
"I'll use hypnosis to ask my subconscious later, to see where this sense of familiarity comes from."
Lumian nodded and started the car.
Halfway through the drive, Anthony suddenly came out of hypnosis and said to Lumian, "I've found the source of the familiarity. I get a similar feeling every time I enter a Church of Steam cathedral."

He was originally a Steam believer.
"The corresponding dream image of a high-level figure in the Church of Steam?" Although Lumian had disguised himself as a Steam believer before, he had hardly ever entered a Church of Steam, so he didn't have the same feeling as Anthony.
"Maybe," Anthony wasn't too sure.
...
At noon, in the rental apartment.
Lumian said to Jenna, who was supporting Franca as she came out to eat, "This afternoon, you and Anthony take Ludwig to check out Dream Tutoring Classes in person. I'll stay home to take care of Franca.
"According to the information provided by the Major Arcana cards, Mr. Fool also enrolled in this tutoring center. This is one of the best ways for us to naturally and normally come into contact with Mr. Fool.
"Moreover, we can observe the impact of the Oracle's death on this tutoring center."
"Mm," Franca spoke up. "It seems a bit strange that the Oracle, as an adult man, was reported missing after just one night of not returning."
Jenna thought for a moment and said, "Maybe Mr. Fool's subconscious thinks this matter is urgent."
"There might be other reasons," Lumian glanced at Ludwig, whose face had soured upon hearing about the tutoring center, and said, "Jenna is responsible for communication and probing, Anthony for observation. I'll leave this matter to you guys."

Chapter 924: Tutoring Class

Unable to drive, Jenna and Anthony chose to take public transportation with the child to Dream Tutoring Classes. They made a comprehensive travel plan and prepared spare change for unexpected situations, rather than relying solely on mobile payments.

After they left, Lumian helped Franca back to the master bedroom and glanced at the large ice blocks in four basins, chuckling. "This isn't much worse than air conditioning."

The only issue was needing to refreeze the water periodically, which consumed some spirituality. But for Demonesses, creating frost was an ability that used very little spirituality.

Plus, it effectively solved the problem of limited refrigerator space.

"Yeah, air conditioning is so expensive," Franca leaned against the pillow and sighed sincerely. "I never imagined being a Demoness would be so practical in daily life."

Lumian sat on the edge of the bed and casually asked, "How are you feeling now?"

"Much better. This morning I was so weak I could only walk slowly," Franca answered honestly. "Since becoming a Beyonder, this is the first time I've been so seriously ill. As expected of the negative effects of a demigod-level item."

Lumian tsked. "But I heard from Jenna that she had to feed you breakfast, and when you needed to go to the washroom, er, restroom, you called her to support you."

Where was the slow walking?

Franca wasn't embarrassed at being exposed, and chuckled. "Can't I enjoy being carefully looked after as a patient?"

Lumian pressed his hand to his own forehead, then felt Franca's.

"Your temperature has indeed come down, but you can continue enjoying being cared for until you're fully recovered."

"Does that mean I can boss you around?" Franca suddenly got excited.

She recalled her university days, when every day a lucky roommate would be ordered to get food for the whole dorm, and she was the luckiest one.

Seeing Franca's eager expression, Lumian smiled and took out a yellow peach from the Traveler's Bag.

"Didn't you say yesterday that you missed the taste of yellow peaches? I happened to pass by a fruit wholesale market on my way back and bought a bag."

"I just mentioned it casually..." Franca was a bit surprised, her eyes curving slightly.

Lumian formed a small fruit knife from frost, and swiftly peeled the yellow peach clean over the bedside trash can. He then cut off a piece, skewered it with the ice knife, and held it to Franca's lips.
Looking at the juicy and tempting flesh, the crystal clear fruit knife, and Lumian's slightly smiling face, Franca suddenly felt the atmosphere was different from when Jenna cared for her in the morning.
The morning felt like a sick father watching a gentle mother urging a gluttonous child to study, while now it feels like a sick wife...
"You're not eating? If you don't eat it, I will." Lumian appeared to take back the piece of peach and put it in his own mouth, with the attitude of brotherly interaction.
Franca snorted and quickly opened her mouth to bite the piece of peach.
She chewed and swallowed, then said rather nostalgically, "It's the taste from my memories."
As she ate the peach Lumian fed her, she brought up their previous topic.
"What do you think is hidden in B1 of Mushu Hospital?"
Lumian considered carefully before saying, "My contact with Naboredisley and other Devils left me a deep impression of one sentence—the entrance to the Abyss is not only in some place in the real world, but also in everyone's heart. We can all fall into the Abyss and become devils not on the Devil pathway. So I suspect the Mother Tree of Desire, standing at the top of the Devil, Wraith, and Baby Cupid pathways, is using Her control over the Abyss to turn Mr. Fool's psychological dark side into Mushu Hospital.
"Then, the Great Mother and the deity worshiped by Order of All Extinction used the psychological dark side to infiltrate a bit of Their power, gradually eroding the dream. The influence of the Abyss is from bottom to top, from the depths of the heart to the surface. Reflected in the specific symbol of Mushu Hospital, this means remodeling from the underground floors to the ground level."
"You mean the underground floors of Mushu Hospital have become a small-scale Abyss, a more complex and terrifying Abyss?" Franca swallowed the peach in her mouth and asked thoughtfully.
Lumian nodded, skillfully cutting another piece of peach and bringing it to Franca's lips.
"Currently we can see the power of the Mother Tree of Desire, the Great Mother, and that deity of Order of All Extinction. The others are unknown for now."
"These evil gods should only be able to influence part of the dream.

It seems they intend to help the Celestial Worthy?" Franca bit the piece of peach with her teeth and asked puzzledly.
Lumian considered for a moment before saying, "That's how it is now, but it may not be the case later.
"Madam Magician told me privately that these evil gods don't actually like the Celestial Worthy that much. If given a choice, Their instinctive desire is to use the Celestial Worthy to pass through the barrier, but not let the Celestial Worthy truly awaken. Perhaps in this dream battle, if Mr. Fool is strong, They will definitely help the Celestial Worthy. If the Celestial Worthy gains a big advantage, they might secretly sabotage the Celestial Worthy's plans.
"Moreover, They Themselves are chaotic and insane, and may do things we can't understand at any time. The Marionettist who should have appeared last night didn't truly show up, perhaps for this reason. In short, what the evil gods would most like to see is both Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy continuing to sleep, indulging in this dream city."
Hearing this, Franca was suddenly moved.
She cast her gaze towards the window filled with brilliant sunlight, towards the distant high-rise buildings, and said in a low voice with self-mockery, "If my dream was like this, if the people I care about were all here, I might also indulge in it, not wanting to wake up..."
...
At Dream Tutoring Classes, in front of the reception desk.
Jenna held Ludwig's hand and handed the flier given by Oracle Danitz to the dark-skinned male receptionist.
"I'd like to know more details about your courses."
The dark-skinned male receptionist's eyes lit up and he put on a smile. "Ma'am, what does your child want to learn?"
"Could you first introduce all the courses?" Jenna hadn't decided yet what class to enroll Ludwig in.
The male receptionist was stunned for a moment, then muttered,
"Before, I would introduce first, then ask the customer what they wanted to learn, but I was criticized by several customers. They told me to ask about their needs first, then give targeted introductions... How is this wrong again..."
Without needing Anthony's observation results, Jenna began to feel this receptionist wasn't very bright, and seemed a bit stupid.
She pondered for a moment and said, "Our child only has time on weekends. Please introduce the weekend courses."
According to the information, Mr. Fool had enrolled in this tutoring center's weekend Business English course!

The male receptionist breathed a sigh of relief, took out some materials, and began detailing the weekend courses his company offered.
After listening for a while, Jenna found that only the Beginner English class had a similar schedule to the Business English class.
She turned her head to look at Ludwig's pained expression, then picked up the Beginner English class materials and said, "It's still 6,666 after the discount? Can it be cheaper?"
Even at just 6,666, it was a very large expense for Jenna and the others. They had borrowed some more money through another app yesterday to scrape together enough without affecting their daily lives.
"Well, only our principal has the authority to give further discounts. I'll get her." The dark-skinned receptionist hurriedly went down the hallway to the office to fetch the principal.
She was a beautiful woman with dyed brown hair, an oval face, and clear blue eyes like spring water. She wore an elegant women's blouse paired with a dark pleated knee-length skirt, exposing her fair, long, and straight calves.
"Principal Ai is exceptionally learned and talented. Not only is she good at English, but also French. She can also paint, appraise antiques, play various musical instruments..." the dark-skinned receptionist went on and on with his introduction.
Jenna could see that Principal Ai was a bit embarrassed and uncomfortable with the praise. At the same time, she noticed Ludwig's expression change, as if he had encountered a natural enemy.
"You want to take the Beginner English class?" Principal Ai interrupted the receptionist's introduction and turned her gaze to Ludwig.
"Yes." Jenna nodded sincerely.
Principal Ai looked at Ludwig and said, "Starting at this age has already missed the best phase for language acquisition, but as long as you're willing to learn, any time is a good time. It's never too late.
"Hmm, 5,000—the lowest cost price. We can't delay the child's education."
This should have been a sales pitch to get people to enroll, but Jenna actually heard sincerity in it. She felt Principal Ai was genuinely considering the child's education.
As expected of an archbishop of the Church of Knowledge, former treasure hunter and Pirate Admiral... Jenna recalled the contents of the file and nodded painfully.
"Alright, we'll enroll in the class at this time slot."

Seeing what Jenna was pointing at, Principal Ai couldn't help but frown. "Anderson's class..."
"Is there a problem?" Jenna asked curiously.
"Anderson is very suitable for teaching young children, but he tends to let them develop bad study habits. If we weren't short-staffed, I wouldn't let him teach the beginner class..." Before Principal Ai could finish speaking, a man turned into the hallway.
He had blonde hair and blue eyes, wearing a white shirt and black vest, with his hands in his pockets.
He smiled at Principal Ai and said, "Edwina, did you just mention my name?"
In the dream city, Edwina was Principal Ai's English name.
Principal Ai composed herself and pointed at Ludwig.
"This little friend wants to enroll in your beginner class."
"Is that so?" Anderson walked up to Ludwig and squatted down without concern for his image, questioning his potential student, "Do you like learning English?"
"No." Ludwig shook his head quickly.
Anderson continued asking, "Then do you like learning French?"
"No." Ludwig continued shaking his head.
"How about Mauritian Creole?" Anderson persisted.
Ludwig shook his head again. "No."
"Then do you like learning to paint?" Anderson changed the question.
Ludwig shook his head without hesitation. "No."
"So what do you like?" Anderson wasn't upset at all.
"I like eating." Ludwig was very honest.
Anderson smiled and stood up, saying, "How about this—study cooking with me, and at least you can be a chef in the future."
If it were someone else, they would definitely think Anderson was mocking their child for having no talent for studying. But Jenna just wanted to say he had a keen eye, immediately seeing Ludwig's essence.
"You know how to cook?" the dark-skinned receptionist asked very hostilely.
Anderson laughed. "I'm very good at roasting rabbit. Danitz originally wanted me to teach him, but..."
At this point, Anderson sighed.
He's the Oracle's roommate, the first to discover the Oracle's disappearance? Jenna's spirits suddenly lifted.

Chapter 925: Hidden Meaning

Jenna, holding Ludwig's hand, deliberately fixed her gaze on Anderson's face. "I heard that Mr. Da who gave us the flier has gone missing. Is there any news?"

Principal Ai, whose English name was Edwina, suddenly looked gloomy. "He was killed."

"Oh my goodness, did something really happen to him?" Jenna had already rehearsed how she should react when inquiring about such matters, and even used the catchphrases popular among ordinary people in the dream city.

Before leaving home, she had deliberately applied makeup to make herself less attractive, to avoid becoming the focus of passersby.

The dark-skinned receptionist nodded gravely.

"We went to the police station to identify the body. Although he liked to show off, was a bit impulsive, and loved attention, he was truly a very, very good person. Why would someone murder him?"

"Robbery?" Jenna offered a guess.

"His phone and valuable belongings were still on him." Principal Ai denied this possibility. "Let's wait for the police investigation results. Hopefully, the murderer will be brought to justice soon."

Her expression was a bit sorrowful, obviously not wanting to discuss this matter further.

The foreign teacher, Anderson, then said, "The night before last, before he went out, he told me he'd ask me how to pursue girls when he got back. I waited for him until dawn, sent him messages but he didn't reply, called him but he didn't answer. I thought at the time, he shouldn't have had a romantic encounter, unless he paid for it, but he was very stingy and saved all his money, saying he wanted to buy a house..."

"You felt something was wrong, so you called the police?" Jenna showed a look of sudden realization.

At the same time, she couldn't help but grumble inwardly, Even though you're talking about a sad event, why do I feel like you're mocking the deceased? Is this really Anderson Hood, once the strongest Hunter of the Fog Sea?

The information provided by the Major Arcana cards mentioned that the principal of Dream Tutoring Classes, Ai Nana, corresponded to the Pirate Admiral Vice Admiral Iceberg Edwina from a few years ago, and the foreign teacher Anderson Hood corresponded to Anderson Hood, the strongest Hunter of the Fog Sea in reality. Of course, this title was now disputed, with Louis Berry having quite a few supporters.

Anderson nodded. "Yes, reporting to the police must be timely. If he

really encountered problems, the police might have been able to save him in time. If he was indeed just fooling around with paid women, the police could have caught him in bed. Who knew... sigh..."
Are you really concerned about the Oracle, or do you have a grudge against him... Jenna couldn't tell for a moment whether Anderson was joking or not.
Moreover, it's not appropriate to joke about such a tragedy!
Jenna asked a few more questions indirectly, roughly confirming that Anderson had reported to the police less than an hour after the Oracle's death, and the police had taken it seriously, not dismissing it with the usual "adult males must be out of contact for 48 hours" excuse. They had started searching near the late-night food stalls just after midnight.
This is close to what we speculated. Mr. Fool's subconscious probably considered this matter very important, or in his subconscious, the Oracle was quite important, so the police acted unusually and started the investigation immediately... Jenna didn't dwell on the Oracle's death, and began paying and filling out forms to enroll Ludwig in the weekend Beginner English class.
She knew that in such scenarios, one should avoid touching on or asking about others' sorrowful matters, especially those involving death, unless the other person was willing to talk about it.
After leaving Dream Tutoring Classes, on the way to the bus stop, Jenna looked at Anthony, who hadn't said much and seemed to have gone unnoticed by Principal Ai, Anderson Hood, and others. "Did you observe any unusual details?"
"The key figures at Dream Tutoring Classes basically match the descriptions in the file, and their attitudes towards the Oracle's death are normal." Anthony had prepared his thoughts. "But I felt that some of Anderson Hood's words just now were a bit over the top, hiding some subtext, as if he wanted to tell us something..."
Before Anthony could finish, a voice suddenly sounded from behind. "I heard you mention my name."
Jenna and Anthony turned around simultaneously to find that Anderson Hood had somehow also left Dream Tutoring Classes and was only four or five meters away from them.
Jenna thought for two seconds and deliberately said, "We were discussing how you don't seem to be very sad about Mr. Da's death, and even seem to be mocking him."
Anderson smiled and looked around before saying, "Because I feel that the people around me have been acting a bit strange lately."
"Strange?" Jenna asked puzzledly.
Anderson lowered his voice. "Don't you suddenly have this feeling

at some point?
"The people around seem to be acting out different scripts to cooperate with you, but occasionally they overdo it or are not meticulous enough, making you notice something is off, making you feel terrified, like it's not real enough.
"Before, they all performed very well, but recently, the flaws have increased significantly."
Wh— Has Anderson Hood perceived the essence of this dream city? But he's just a dream image, not a real person's projection. The Major Arcana card holders said that the real Anderson Hood doesn't have any special items or connections, so he can't enter Mr. Fool's dream...
He now seems like a character in a book who discovers that he's just a character in a story... Jenna was shocked and found it incredible.
Seeing Jenna stunned, Anderson laughed. "You believed it? Looks like the story I made up isn't bad, and my acting isn't bad either..."
After saying this, Anderson waved his hand and walked towards the nearby convenience store.
Behind him, a group of students who had finished class poured out of Dream Tutoring Classes.
Jenna and Anthony exchanged glances, neither angered by Anderson's prank, but rather feeling that he really had something unsaid.
This person, who should only be a dream image, seemed a bit special.
Looking at the students leaving the building where Dream Tutoring Classes was located, Jenna withdrew her gaze and continued walking towards the bus stop.
While waiting for the bus, she curiously asked Ludwig, "You seemed a bit scared when you saw Principal Ai?"
Ludwig mumbled, "She was one of my former teachers."
Ah, Ludwig's teacher from the Church of Knowledge, no wonder... Jenna suddenly understood.
...
In the rental apartment.
After listening to Jenna and Anthony's account, Lumian considered for a moment and said, "Currently, we're still in the observation stage of key figures. Don't further contact Anderson for now. After we finish the observation phase, we'll find an opportunity when there are no other teachers or students from Dream Tutoring Classes around him to probe him."
Franca, who had recovered her health, also regained her normal thinking ability.

"You suspect that Mr. Fool enrolling in Dream Tutoring Classes caused problems for some of the teachers and students there, and the Oracle's death is a continuation of these problems rather than the beginning? And Anderson also became suspicious because he noticed some small inconsistencies?"
"This possibility is quite high." Lumian stood up and said, "I'm going to cook now."
He walked towards the kitchen, and Jenna naturally followed to assist.
Lumian had already steamed a pot of rice in the rice cooker. Now, he put the rice into several large bowls and added spicy sauces like Lao Gan Ma.
"After Ludwig finishes these, he'll be about 70-80% full, and then he can eat dinner normally with us," Lumian casually said to Jenna.
Jenna helped carry two bowls of rice, nodding seriously. "Yes, the food for Ludwig should be divided into two types: one for filling his stomach and one for tasting delicious flavors. It can't just be for filling his stomach."
"You seem quite concerned about him?" Lumian picked up the remaining bowls and chuckled.
Jenna laughed self-mockingly. "I feel a bit guilty, I guess."
After delivering these bowls of rice to Ludwig, Lumian washed the rice cooker clean and steamed another pot for himself and the others, using the quick mode.
"When we have money, we should buy another rice cooker..." Lumian muttered as he took out vegetables and meat from the refrigerator.
Jenna took them over, washed the vegetables under the tap, and used her Demoness powers to control frost to defrost the meat.
She washed one item and passed it to Lumian, who used knives formed from frost to chop and slice.
The two chatted casually, occasionally falling silent to listen to how Franca was teaching Ludwig to watch cartoons in the living room, without slowing down their food preparation.
Jenna glanced at the sky outside, tinged with golden-red afterglow, and said, "We probably won't go out at night for now. What's the plan for tomorrow?"
During the observation phase, they had to be extremely careful. Since the magic mirror Arrodes had hinted that there were problems at night, they wouldn't go out after dark for now.
While quickly slicing with his ice knife, Lumian looked down at the increasing pile of shredded meat and said without hesitation, "In the morning, we'll go to Star Dream Provisions Store to get the reply from the Major Arcana card holders, and observe the police

station nearby while we're at it.
"In the afternoon, we'll observe one of the most important targets."
"Mr. Fool's friend Peng Deng?" Jenna knew who Lumian was referring to.
Peng Deng was a very special person in the dream city. He was a good friend of Mr. Fool, that is, Zhou Mingrui, but there was no corresponding person for him in reality.
Following the logic that characters closer to Mr. Fool should be more important, Peng Deng should have a high status and position in the real world. However, the Major Arcana card holders and other coin holders had never found out who he represented or symbolized.
At the same time, they hadn't found any problems with Peng Deng in the dream.
Lumian nodded and continued, "Based on my experience, a character in such a position must have a strong symbolic meaning. We just haven't found the approach or method to interpret it yet.
"One reason why Mr. Star became a key focus and was kicked out of the dream by the Celestial Worthy might be his strong connection to Mr. Fool's Angel of Time—a decryption expert. If He truly came into contact with Peng Deng, He might see something."
"Right." Jenna finished washing all the vegetables, shook her hands, and let the water droplets turn into frost and float down.
...
The next morning, at the entrance of Star Dream Provisions Store.
Franca, feeling a bit fearful yet somewhat expectant, followed Lumian inside.
The magic mirror Arrodes had indeed left some psychological trauma on her, but she was also quite curious about the brass book, which was much more expensive than the mirror, and the true identity of the shop owner.

Chapter 926: Turning Fantasy into Reality

At first glance, Franca noticed that Star Dream Provisions Store really did resemble an antique shop from the Northern Continent, with very obvious mystical elements added.

The only things that didn't fit this style were the shelves themselves and the mobile phone the shopkeeper was fiddling with, along with the tablet placed in front of her.

"Good morning, ma'am. We're here to pick up a reply," Lumian said very politely as he approached the counter.

The shopkeeper, dressed in a black dress and fiddling with her phone, pulled out a letter from under the counter and placed it on top.

"Thank you," Lumian said as he took it, without opening the letter on the spot.

Franca then pointed to the brass book. "Ma'am, may I flip through that book?"

"Go ahead," replied the black-dressed shopkeeper without looking up, and without cautioning Franca not to damage the antique.

Franca walked briskly to the shelf on the right and picked up the book that looked as if it were forged from brass.

The cover was cold and hard to the touch, clearly made of metal.

Franca quickly flipped through it, finding that the inside pages were still paper, but completely blank.

Nothing special... Franca muttered to herself.

No sooner had the thought crossed her mind than she suddenly saw lines of text appear on the blank pages. But these words vanished in an instant, too fast for even a Demoness's eyesight to capture the specific content.

Am I seeing things? Franca patiently waited for 20-30 seconds, and again saw new text appear in the brass book. But she still couldn't make out a single word before the corresponding content disappeared.

In this situation, even the Dream Divination method couldn't be used afterwards to recall the specific images.

There's definitely something strange about this... Franca thought to herself as she returned the brass book to its original place.

At the same time, out of the corner of her eye, she glimpsed a dark greenish-black figure flash by behind the shelf.

It was a snake that had grown white feathers and small wings!

Franca was startled and instinctively took two steps back, turning to warn the shopkeeper, "Ma'am, there's a snake in your shop!"

Be careful!

"No need to be afraid," the black-dressed shopkeeper raised her

head, revealing her beautiful face. "That's my pet."
"I see..." Franca let out a sigh of relief. Along with Jenna and Anthony, who were browsing around the store, she followed Lumian out and back to the gray sedan parked nearby. They used frost to forcibly lower the high temperature inside the car caused by the sun.
After sitting in the driver's seat, Franca frowned slightly and said, "The snake I just saw looked a lot like a feathered serpent from the Death pathway. Well, a miniature harmless version.
"The shopkeeper couldn't be keeping a Mythical Creature from the Death pathway as a pet, could she?"
A complete Mythical Creature would represent an Angel level!
Lumian calmly said as he opened the letter in his hand, "It's not impossible. Besides those with special items and connections, those that can enter the dream are at least true gods."
Wh— Were we just dealing with a true god? And she even answered my question? As Franca was still in shock, she saw a person carrying many bags walk up to the driver's side and knock on the window.
"Can I help you?" Franca cautiously rolled down the window.
The person had an ordinary appearance and wore a smile, holding out what was in his hand to Franca. "Wanna buy something? The latest models of bugs and pinhole cameras."
"..." Franca's mouth twitched. "Bro, that's illegal."
The man tried to continue his sales pitch, but Franca put on a stern face and firmly refused.
After closing the window, Franca started the car, while Lumian began examining the reply from the Major Arcana card holders, mainly written by Madam Magician.
At this point, Franca suddenly paused. "Don't rush, let's first make sure there are no bugs or pinhole cameras installed in the car."
With everyone suppressed to Sequence 7, relying on the Demonesses' spirituality and divination could indeed effectively prevent mystical eavesdropping and peeping, but they had completely overlooked the scientific aspect before!
Lumian and Jenna could understand what bugs and pinhole cameras were used for. One relied on a Hunter's observation skills to quickly search for unusual traces, while the other used Magic Mirror Divination to check on the situation by questioning her own spirituality.
"There aren't any," Jenna reported her divination results.
"That's good." Franca breathed a sigh of relief. "From now on, we must remember to guard against scientific methods. It's fortunate that the dude selling contraband items reminded me, otherwise

we might have been caught off guard at some point! Uh..."
At this point, Franca turned her gaze to the rearview mirror.
She saw the man who had been selling bugs and pinhole cameras turn a corner at the end of the street and disappear.
"Could he be an ally? Deliberately coming to warn us?" Franca mused perceptively.
Lumian pondered for a moment before stating, "Probably."
"Who could it be?" Franca asked, focusing more on driving as she looked at the road ahead.
Soon, she parked the car in a roadside spot diagonally across from the police station.
Lumian created a medium-sized screen out of frost and displayed the reply from the Major Arcana card holders on this mirror for easy viewing.
"After confirmation, the Demoness of Despair Beyonder characteristics, related materials, and special mirror world fragments you obtained are all real.
"Don't get excited yet. This doesn't mean every Beyonder in the dream city can produce Beyonder characteristics. It must be someone like you whose consciousness directly enters.
"In other words, if you die in the dream city, affected by Fooling, your bodies in the real world will also die, producing Beyonder characteristics. This feedback to the dream city will then Graft the Beyonder characteristics onto the recipient, achieving the effect of turning fantasy into reality and reality into fantasy.
"You should already understand my meaning—the resurrected female corpse is roughly equivalent to a real consciousness entering.
"As for her name and background, you should ask Ludwig. I'll just briefly explain that she was once equivalent to the Celestial Worthy's marionette, so she still is now. Don't ask why—don't ask about high-level matters of the Seer and Marauder pathways. In any case, through this connection, and through the identity Mr. Fool's subconscious wove for her in the dream, she entered this dream and was given new life by the Great Mother, gaining humanity and consciousness that are unlike a marionette.
"Back to the issue of the Beyonder characteristics—if you use it to concoct potions and perform rituals to advance to demigod in the dream city, your bodies in the real world will also become demigods. Remember, under the influence of abilities like Fooling, false dreams may become true reality, and what you consider real may become false.
"Moreover, the dream city is currently restricted to Sequence 7, so the mental effects of potions and the minimum requirements for

rituals will also be suppressed to this level. For example, a plague that originally needed to infect 30,000 people and bring them pain and despair might now only need 300 infected. Taking a risk in B1 of Mushu Hospital might be enough to complete the ritual.

"Doesn't this make you think 'that works?' But I must tell you, a price has already been exacted for what fate bestowed. Advancing to Demoness of Despair through this method carries extremely large hidden dangers. Subsequently, extremely great difficulties will need to be overcome to truly count as a Sequence 4 demigod.

"Think about it—in the dream city, all the various problems brought about by consuming a demigod potion are actually restricted to Sequence 7, so they can be endured relatively easily, and Sequence 7 level rituals can be used to assist advancement. But upon leaving the dream and returning to reality, those problems suppressed to Sequence 7 will break free from the Fooling and instantly return to Sequence 4 levels. At that time, the corresponding person will likely lose control immediately.

"Of course, this is not unsolvable, just very difficult—not as simple as performing a complete ritual in reality.

"The only method we can think of now is to fully digest that Sequence 4 potion before leaving the dream, before this dream is no longer maintained. This digestion will be grafted onto reality, allowing the vast majority of hidden dangers suppressed to Sequence 7 to be resolved in advance. When the person returns to reality, they will be a Sequence 4 demigod in good condition—reality will have been truly fooled at this moment.

"The difficulty with this method lies in the fact that how long the dream can be maintained and when you will be locked onto by the Celestial Worthy and directly kicked out are not things you can decide for yourselves. It's full of unknown risks, and it's extremely difficult to obtain a good opportunity and enough time to digest the potion."

Reading to this point, Franca, Lumian, and the others looked at each other, speechless.

Is that even allowed?

They had originally thought that using false Angel qualifications and sealed Angels to simply act out roles and quickly digest potions was already the limit of exploiting rule loopholes. Who knew that after reading all these words about Fooling and Grafting, they felt their brains had been fooled.

You can really truly advance in the dream...

The potion can be fooled, the ritual can be fooled, the mind can be fooled, even the boundary between fantasy and reality can be fooled...

Of course, it's also possible that only we ourselves are fooled, believing we've truly completed the advancement and become demigods when in reality we've just developed a mental disorder...
Haha, everyone's been fooled! Everyone's been fooled! Franca couldn't help but go a little crazy in her mind.
"Is this the terrifying aspect of great existences?" Jenna took a small breath.
Lumian chuckled. "Many things we consider unbreakable and unchangeable may just be playthings for great existences."
"They can make them round if They want, or flat if They want..." Franca mumbled along.
Through this letter, they truly and concretely felt what it meant to be a great existence.
They continued reading the letter displayed on the ice crystal screen.
"After reading the previous part, haven't you had this thought:
"In the future, after Mr. Fool wakes up, couldn't we ask him to use similar dreams to help lower the difficulty of rituals and advancements, allowing those in need to become demigods and giving them enough time to digest potions in the dream?
"First, we must be clear that Mr. Fool alone would find it difficult to accomplish this, because such a real dream, a dream that allows Fooling to blur fantasy and reality, comes from other domains.
"Second, not every demigod will eventually be able to digest their own potion. They will live their entire lives in a dream, and if the dream cognition is not restored to Sequence 4 levels, their lifespan will also be suppressed to the corresponding mid to low Sequences. But if the dream cognition is restored to Sequence 4, those problems hidden by Fooling will erupt again.
"Third, is it really appropriate to cause Mr. Fool to sleep for several years, over ten years, or even centuries to help one Beyonder advance?
"Finally, the acting out of many potions will tend towards evil. If you really want to create a large-scale plague in Mr. Fool's dream, not to mention how easily the Celestial Worthy would notice, Mr. Fool would be the first to kick you out."
Why do I feel like Madam Magician is hinting at me... I really hadn't thought of that. This dream is just like reality, not at all like a game. *How could I have antisocial thoughts?* Even in games, I only stopped being humane after getting bored with normal gameplay... Franca muttered to herself.

Chapter 927: Misfortune?

After discussing matters related to the reanimated female corpse, Madam Magician affirmed Lumian and the others' current strategy. She said one major reason why previous gold coin holders failed to find a way to awaken Mr. Fool was that they were too eager to contact the target person, resulting in being locked onto by the Celestial Worthy and kicked out of the dream, or fully restricted, only able to make some contributions in accumulating intelligence.

At the end of the letter, Madam Magician told Lumian and the others that some gold coin holders could still enter this dream city, but they could not communicate with Mr. Fool or intervene in any events. However, they could act as human cameras, helping to collect information on certain occasions.

The content displayed on the ice crystal screen ended here. Lumian flicked his wrist, burning the letter, and turned to Ludwig. "The background of the reanimated female corpse."

Ludwig was staring longingly at a snack shop on the street, and reluctantly recounted the information he obtained from the corpse:

"Panatiya, a member of the Demoness Sect, nicknamed Nation of 'Despair Nightingale', was one of the perpetrators of the Great Smog of Backlund incident. She became the marionette of Antigonus, a great noble of the Tudor Empire, in a secret town on the way to the Nation of the Evernight. At that time, Antigonus was in a state of madness, mentally closer to the Celestial Worthy you guys talk about..."

"For the top level of the Marauder pathway, the Despair Nightingale is indeed equivalent to the Celestial Worthy's marionette." Lumian nodded slowly after carefully listening to Ludwig's statement.

His gaze turned to outside the car window, watching people coming and going at the entrance of the police station, and he said as he pondered, "Fooling, Grafting, dreams, reality—I don't fully understand these concepts, so I can only trust Madam Magician's explanation for now. What puzzles me is why the Celestial Worthy had to bring the Despair Nightingale marionette into the dream city, rather than using her virtual image here?

"It couldn't be just to give us Beyonder characteristics and special mirror world fragments, could it?"

"Indeed," Franca agreed, also finding the Celestial Worthy's choice in this matter incomprehensible.

Since Panatiya was the Celestial Worthy's marionette, her

corresponding dream image should also easily become the Celestial Worthy's marionette again. In her subsequent tasks, the role she played did not require her to be a real Demoness-judging from Panatiya's reenacted script alone, an illusory Demoness belonging to the dream city could equally fulfill the corresponding responsibilities.
The Celestial Worthy chose a more complicated method over a simpler one, which had to imply hidden reasons.
These reasons might be crucial.
Anthony, sitting in the back, followed up with his analysis of the character's psychological state.
"If the description in the information and Madam Susie's reminder are correct, Mr. Fool's dream image is very cautious and careful. So sending a Demoness to approach him with reasonable excuses and in a gradual manner, cultivating feelings through daily, moderate interactions to dissolve unfamiliarity and wariness, might not be the best choice. Because Demonesses are too beautiful, it would instinctively make someone who considers themselves ordinary draw a line in their heart, feeling that it's not something they could obtain."
Lumian, Jenna, and Franca—the three Demonesses—all looked at Anthony simultaneously.
Anthony paused for two seconds before continuing, "If I were to arrange it, I would find a way to turn one of Zhou Mingrui's current female colleagues into a marionette. That colleague should preferably be very ordinary, not a Beyonder, and not particularly pretty, but still have her own charm from certain angles or expressions.
"After she becomes familiar with Zhou Mingrui, arrange for her to drink the Assassin potion, gradually and unobtrusively enhancing her charm, allowing love to develop slowly..."
Lumian's eyes flickered a few times, but he remained silent.
"You Spectators..." Franca sighed sincerely.
Indeed, better at writing scripts than the Celestial Worthy.
She had just seriously thought about it and felt that if it were her former self before transmigrating, she definitely wouldn't be able to resist!
"Then why did the Celestial Worthy have to bring His own Demoness marionette into the dream city, and even use the power of the Great Mother to give her new life?" Jenna repeated Lumian and Franca's previous confusion.
After a brief silence in the car, Lumian thoughtfully said, "Don't you think there are too many Demonesses appearing in this matter?"

"What do you mean?" Jenna vaguely guessed what Lumian wanted to say.
It was the dream symbolism he had been emphasizing several times every day recently.
Lumian slightly curled his lips.
"As a team coming to the dream to awaken Mr. Fool, the number of Demonesses among us is abnormally high, exceeding half. And the main opponent abandoned the simple approach, chose the complicated one, and even brought a Demoness marionette belonging to Himself here.
"The Major Arcana card holders have said that Mr. Fool has authority over fate, and that Celestial Worthy must have it too.
"The lucky coins ultimately gathered in our hands, bringing us to this dream city—doesn't this symbolize the choice of fate, symbolizing that it will be a Demoness who awakens Mr. Fool? Similarly, it will also be a Demoness who helps the Celestial Worthy achieve victory?
"I had previously felt that the pathways chosen by the lucky coins this time were too monotonous, and the appearance of the reanimated female corpse deepened my suspicion."
"Then why must it be a Demoness? And why must it be an external Demoness with real consciousness?" Jenna mused along this line of thought.
Perhaps figuring out this question would reveal how to awaken Mr. Fool.
Lumian chuckled.
"For now, I can only think of two reasons:
"First, a real Demoness symbolizes real calamity, and real calamity will bring great changes to the dream city. Where there's change, there's opportunity—maybe good, maybe bad. But this doesn't explain why there aren't as many Hunters, as Hunters are also symbols of calamity.
"Second, some crucial thing, a path leading to Mr. Fool's awakening, can only be completed by a Demoness of a not-low Sequence."
"It could be both reasons," Franca said, while worrying about the air conditioning costs and considering switching to ice blocks for cooling, but also concerned about being detected by Beyonders in the police force. She continued observing people entering and leaving the police station.
Thus, they observed and discussed intermittently until noon.
During this process, Lumian and the others saw Officer Deng and his fiancée Daly leave hand in hand to find a restaurant for lunch, and also saw key figures like Old Neil who bore the title of Interpol

officer.
Their observations largely matched the descriptions in their information.
"Didn't see Mr. Star..." Franca withdrew her gaze, preparing to drive onto the road.
"He's probably out investigating the case at the mall's surveillance room," Lumian had noticed this information while scrolling through his phone earlier.
Franca didn't say more and drove the car to the new urban district, full of high-rise buildings and a modern atmosphere, parking opposite a building over a hundred meters tall.
Their next observation target, also a key suspect, Peng Deng, worked here.
Just as Franca parked the car, Lumian and the others saw the target approaching from a distance.
He was a young man with an unremarkable appearance, holding an iced coffee and looking down at his phone.
Every time Jenna thought he would bump into pedestrians or obstacles on the road, Peng Deng, without raising his head, would skillfully maneuver around them.
Almost simultaneously, Peng Deng's information flashed through Lumian and the others' minds:
"Peng Deng, 24 years old, from the same hometown as Zhou Mingrui, classmate from kindergarten, elementary school, and middle school, schoolmate in high school, currently an interior designer, living in Herun Community next to New City Garden.
"He has a girlfriend named Nie Zhen, living in the High-Tech Zone, planning to move in with Peng Deng after their current lease expires.
"Currently sharing rent with a foreign worker named Grisha, who has an eccentric personality, is paranoid, and has crude manners..."
Lumian carefully observed Peng Deng, who was wearing a light-colored shirt with sweat seeping through the back, not missing any of his movements or facial expression details.
Only after Peng Deng walked back into the building did Lumian withdraw his gaze and ask Anthony, "Did you notice anything?"
Anthony shook his head.
"That's normal. If it were that simple to discover problems, the Major Arcana card holders would have had results long ago," Lumian wasn't disappointed.
He said to all team members, "We're not sure if Peng Deng will go out in the afternoon. Let's go observe his girlfriend and his roommate for a while first. Tomorrow is the weekend, and there's

a possibility of contacting Mr. Fool at the tutoring class in the afternoon. We need to quickly go through all the listed personnel that need observation."
Jenna and the others had no objections.
Franca tried to start the car but couldn't complete the ignition no matter what.
The rumbling sound failed to transform into a steady hum.
"Dammit! The car broke down..." Franca slapped the steering wheel, unable to hide her frustration.
At this moment, only one thought appeared in Lumian and Jenna's minds:
We'll have to pay for repairs...
Immediately after, Lumian furrowed his brow.
"Isn't this too coincidental?
"The car breaks down right after we observe Peng Deng..."
"Indeed, there were no signs of trouble before." Franca also began to find this suspicious.
Would approaching Peng Deng with ill intentions lead to misfortune?
But the Major Arcana card holders who had previously observed Peng Deng hadn't mentioned any similar situations.
"This is an anomaly, let's record it..." Lumian said to Anthony.
He opened the door and got out of the car, habitually wanting to check it himself to see if he could repair it. But after standing in the sun-scorched area, he remembered that he had no understanding of the structure of internal combustion engine cars. The only thing he could do was bang on the hood a few times, hoping that vibration and luck might somehow make the vehicle fix itself.
"I'll call the car rental company," Franca said, picking up her phone from the holder.
Just then, an enthusiastic voice came from the roadside.
"Hello, Li, and An, what's wrong?"
Lumian and Anthony, who had also gotten out of the car, looked towards the street and saw it was Stiano, the foreign exchange student they had met yesterday, who was suspected to be the dream image corresponding to a high-ranking member of the Church of Steam.
"The car broke down." Lumian pointed at the gray sedan.
Stiano, carrying a travel backpack, brightened up.
"Maybe I can help you fix it."

Chapter 928: Adding a Friend

When Stiano volunteered to help, Lumian's thoughts raced. He smiled and said, "Thank you so much!"

Stiano took off his backpack and, like a magician, pulled out one car repair tool after another. He opened the hood of the gray sedan.

Seeing this, Franca couldn't help but wail inwardly, No!

It was only going to cost one or two thousand to fix before, but now it might cost several thousand after he's done!

She could guess why Lumian was willing to let Stiano help. The information provided by the Major Arcana card holders didn't mention this high-ranking Church of Steam member's projection in the dream city. He didn't seem very important or related to Mr. Fool's awakening, yet he had encountered the team twice by chance. This indicated either an arrangement of fate or that he himself harbored something special. Observing him more at this stage might provide useful guidance at a crucial moment in the future.

For the Demonesses, this was both a conclusion from logical reasoning and a prompt from spiritual intuition.

Never mind, this is just a dream, not reality. As long as Mr. Fool believes that the Church of Steam and Machinery's high-ranking members are good at repairing machines, then Stiano should be able to fix the car... Franca comforted herself, quietly producing ice cubes to dispel the heat invading the car.

Soon after, Stiano raised his face, with traces of light yellow beard, avoiding his oil-stained palms, and used the back of his hand to push up the plain glasses perched on the bridge of his nose. He said to Franca inside the car and Lumian outside, "It's fixed."

Really? Don't lie to me... Franca tried it and found that the vehicle could indeed start again, very smoothly.

Lumian took out a bottle of mineral water filled with "Hunter-Demoness" branded boiled water and provided a stream of water for Stiano to wash his hands and tools at the roadside sewer opening.

After the other party had cleaned his hands and put away his tools, Lumian expressed his thanks again and took out his phone, unlocked the screen, and said with a smile, "Let's add each other on WeChat. If you need any help in the future, you can always find us. Haha, as long as it's within our capabilities."

Stiano looked at Lumian seriously, then smiled and said, "Okay."

He then took out his own phone, allowing Lumian to add him as a WeChat friend by scanning the code.

After scanning, Lumian found that the other party's nickname was

"Electric Power Energy and Information Technology".
Feels weird... Lumian waved goodbye to Stiano, returned to the gray sedan, and showed this gentleman's WeChat to Jenna and the others.
Franca glanced at it and said amusingly, "This nickname sounds like a university course.
"Check out his Moments!"
This was the first non-team member friend Lumian had added on WeChat, completely forgetting that Franca had mentioned they could look at Moments to gather information.
He quickly tapped on Stiano's avatar and then went to his Moments:
"Today: The professor's understanding of the concept of information is rather biased. Information is also energy, and energy also contains information. One of the essences of each existence is the aggregation of corresponding information.
"Yesterday: Found an old car, the mechanical aesthetics fascinated me.
"August 13: I created a wonderful machine.
"—Only 3 days of Moments are visible—"
"A wonderful machine?" Lumian murmured puzzledly, "How wonderful can it be? As a local in the dream city, no matter how wonderful the machine he creates, it shouldn't be able to exceed the limitations of the dream itself."
"He does indeed seem like a high-ranking member of the Church of Steam, and also shows a state of striving to learn and think after coming into contact with more advanced civilizations. This should be the underlying logic when Mr. Fool's subconscious wove this image," Franca casually said as she drove the car back onto the road.
In the time that followed, they observed key targets such as Peng Deng's girlfriend Nie Zhen, Peng Deng's roommate Grisha, Zhou Mingrui's roommate Mobet, and others.
As it was nearing the end of the workday, they returned to the building where Peng Deng worked, patiently waiting for him to finish his day's work.
Peng Deng appeared just after 6 p.m. and chose to take the subway back to Herun Community where he rented.
Franca drove the car with Jenna and Ludwig to wait at the destination in advance, while Lumian and Anthony followed into the subway station.
Along the way, many women cast glances at Lumian, seemingly struck by his handsomeness, even though Lumian had made himself look a bit uglier before going out.

Of course, a few men were also sneaking peeks.
Meanwhile, Peng Deng was focused on his phone, not caring at all whether there were any beautiful women around, let alone someone of the same sex who was merely charming.
A normal level of handsomeness isn't enough to be approached or attract too much attention. Unless there's an added gimmick, it won't become a trending search or headline... Lumian felt a bit relieved.
Anthony, beside him, was naturally ignored by those around them.
Thanks to the Hunter's tracking skills and the Demoness's ability to hide in shadows at any time, Lumian easily followed Peng Deng to the vicinity of Herun Community.
The latter didn't go home immediately but turned towards Ankang North Road, walked to near New City Garden, and entered a restaurant called "Yuzhou Small Dishes".
Lumian looked left and right and saw Franca roll down the car window and wave to him and Anthony.
After they got in the car, Franca asked with concern, "Did you gain anything?"
Lumian first shook his head, then muttered puzzledly, "Now I'm more curious about what's on his phone that he can keep looking at it constantly."
He was looking at it while riding the subway, while on the escalator, and even while walking.
"You don't understand." Franca sighed.
Jenna, looking at the "Yuzhou Small Dishes" restaurant, recalled, "This is the restaurant where Mr. Fool and Peng Deng often eat. If we wait a bit longer, Mr. Fool might come too.
"Should we observe their interaction?"
Lumian glanced at the sky outside. "We can."
It wouldn't get dark until after 8 p.m. in this dream city's summer.
Jenna tersely acknowledged. "Then I'll buy a roast duck for Ludwig, so he stops complaining about being hungry."
She had already found dinner for Ludwig earlier, at a "Fruit Wood Roast Duck" shop on the same side as the car, with a paper sign saying "30 yuan each".
Lumian looked at Ludwig, whose mouth was dripping with suspicious liquid, and said with a smile, "Make it two; we'll try some too."
Time ticked by minute by minute. Lumian and the others had tried the roast duck and eaten steamed buns, but they still hadn't seen Mr. Fool's dream incarnation, Zhou Mingrui. Meanwhile, Peng Deng had finished his meal and was returning towards Herun Community.

"Maybe Mr. Fool wanted to try something different tonight?" Franca dipped the last piece of duck meat wrapped in pancake into sweet bean sauce and brought it towards her mouth.
Gulp!
She heard a clear swallowing sound.
Glancing at Ludwig's face full of desire, Franca sighed and handed over the food in her hand.
Lumian withdrew his gaze from outside the window.
"He might have gone to do something else. I didn't see him return to New City Garden."
"Should we continue tailing?" Jenna pointed at Peng Deng's retreating figure.
Lumian shook his head. "It's getting dark. If we keep following, something unexpected might happen."
Franca said in an agreeing tone, "The Major Arcana card holders also mentioned that one of the most likely signs of Peng Deng being problematic is that he has never met with Mr. Fool, that is, Zhou Mingrui, after dark.
"They're childhood friends, so it's very normal to have a late-night snack together or watch a movie. Mr. Fool has initiated invitations many times, and Peng Deng himself has also invited Mr. Fool, but they never managed to meet up in the end. Every time it was because Peng Deng had something come up—either his girlfriend wouldn't allow it, or his girlfriend suddenly got sick, or his roommate broke the door lock and they had to wait for a locksmith to come open the door...
"But when they choose to have meals or go out during the day, they always succeed, and that girlfriend who always obstructs Peng Deng occasionally participates too."
"Combined with the magic mirror's hint to 'beware of the night', these details seem very strange." Lumian nodded.
Back at the rented apartment.
Seeing Lumian staring at the increasingly dark sky outside and falling into deep thought, Franca asked curiously, "What's on your mind?"
"I'm thinking of going out tonight, to move around like ordinary people, to see if we encounter any more anomalies or problems," Lumian said consideringly.
He wanted to test the boundaries of the "night problem" a bit before officially contacting Zhou Mingrui tomorrow afternoon.
They hadn't gone out last night, and everything was normal.
"Like ordinary people..." Franca's eyes twinkled slightly, and she said to Lumian and Jenna with a smile, "Let's go watch a movie!"
Lumian and the others already knew the concept of movies and

were curious about it, so Franca's suggestion was unanimously approved.
Franca immediately smiled like a fox who had stolen a hen. "Let's go to a different mall. We can also scratch some more lottery tickets. Then we'll have money for tonight's movie tickets and popcorn, right?"
We can't go to the same place, it would attract attention!
Hearing the word "popcorn", Ludwig, who had been uninterested before, suddenly brightened up.
...
In another mall.
Franca, satisfied with winning over two thousand in prizes again, led her teammates towards the cinema on the fourth floor.
Passing by the third floor, they saw a long queue forming at the entrance of a very artistic-looking bookstore.
"A book signing event?" Franca, who was curious about everything and interested in everything since coming to the dream city, pulled Jenna over to see which author it was.
"Romance novel queen... Salted Fish Without Dreams... author of the original Great Pirate series novels..." Franca read out the key words on the pull-up banner.
"That pen name is so strange," Jenna expressed her feelings.
Franca smiled and said, "This is only ordinarily strange. Later, I'll help you download an app and show you how the pen names of those web novel authors are each stranger than the last!"
As she spoke, Franca tried hard to stand on tiptoe to look at the author who was signing books. Lumian walked to her side and also cast his gaze into the bookstore.
A few seconds later, as the author raised her head, Lumian and Franca's expressions froze simultaneously.
"What's wrong?" Jenna noticed their abnormality.
Franca answered with a strange expression, "I don't think my eyes are playing tricks on me...
"How can she be a romance novel queen..."
"Who?" Jenna asked puzzledly.
"Madam Magician," answered Lumian in a suppressed voice.

Chapter 929: Movie

"What?" Jenna was shocked by Lumian's answer.

Madam Magician's image in Mr. Fool's dream is the romance novelist "Salted Fish Without Dreams"?

Although Jenna had previously seen characters like Emperor Roselle as a company CEO (in news reports) and Vice Admiral Iceberg as a cram school principal, she had never actually interacted with those famous figures in reality. But Madam Magician was someone she had truly met, talked to, and sought advice from.

How could such a powerful Angel, a holder of a Major Arcana card, and one of Mr. Fool's followers, be a romance novelist here?

This suddenly highlighted the absurdity, distortion, and ridiculousness of the dream.

Jenna's position didn't allow her to see through the crowd to the author's appearance, so she turned her gaze to the inside of the bookstore's glass wall, where the silhouette of the person signing books was faintly reflected.

Jenna's eyes, disguised as deep brown by Lie, instantly became profound, as if hiding mirror after mirror within.

Through the mirrors, she clearly saw the author's figure: long, slightly curled hair dyed brown, wearing a colorful spaghetti strap dress with layered fabric, tassels, and batik, exuding a strong exotic style. Combined with her beautiful face, it gave off a free and casual aura. It was unmistakably the Major Arcana card holder, Madam Magician!

"It really is her..." Jenna whispered.

Lumian stepped back a few paces, distancing himself from the crowd queuing for autographs.

Hiding a mirror in his hand and speaking in a low voice, he muttered as if to himself, "Based on our observations and the information provided by the Major Arcana card holders, when Mr. Fool's subconscious weaves dream images, it significantly references the characteristics of the corresponding real-world figures. Emperor Roselle was the ruler of a country, so in the dream city he became the boss of a large company. Vice Admiral Iceberg is a demigod of the Church of Knowledge, fond of teaching, and long educated pirates on the Golden Dream. So in the dream city, she became the principal of a cram school..."

"Are you suggesting that Madam Magician's real identity is more or less related to being an author?" Franca, also in the Mirror Maze, quickly understood what Lumian was trying to express.

Lumian's gaze swept across the banners reflected in the Mirror

Maze, stopping on a description.
He asked Franca and Jenna in a low voice, "What is the Great Pirate series about?"
"I'll search it up," Franca said, taking out her phone and tapping on the screen.
As she searched, Franca's expression gradually became strange.
Jenna, suppressing the urge to search for related content on her own phone, asked curiously, "Got anything?"
"The Great Pirate series is about legendary pirates active at sea. Each volume has a different theme. The volume of the third part is 'Crazy Adventurer', and the story takes place between the adventurer Gehrman Sparrow and three beautiful female pirates: Admiral of Stars, Vice Admiral Iceberg, and Vice Admiral Ailment..." Franca summarized the key points to her companions with complex emotions.
Jenna was stunned upon hearing this. Although Lumian had some guesses and suspicions before, he couldn't help but interrupt Franca, "Isn't this part of the content of The Great Adventurer series?"
"Apparently so," Franca agreed.
Lumian looked again at the banners reflected in the Mirror Maze and the queuing crowd, saying as if in thought,
"Mr. Fool's subconscious has woven Madam Magician's dream identity as the original author of the Great Pirate series, specializing in romance...
"The Great Adventurer series from the real world is partially reflected in the Great Pirate series in the dream...
"The Great Adventurer series has a strong romantic element, with the interactions between Gehrman Sparrow and the female pirate admirals described rather ambiguously, but left unclear...
"The Great Adventurer series has turned many famous pirates into comic characters or protagonists of sensational rumors, and even includes introductions to mystical knowledge and the privacy of two Oracles. Yet the author Fors Wall has never been visited by any pirate or warned by the Church..."
Hearing this, Franca had already drawn a conclusion and said softly, "How would the pirates dare..."
Seeking out the Angel of Stars for an explanation would be like delivering oneself for a bounty.
"Madam Magician is Fors Wall, the author of The Great Adventurer series?" Jenna asked herself incredulously, then answered her own question, "I always thought she didn't do book signings for fear of exposing her whereabouts and being revenged upon by pirates..."
Jenna suddenly turned to Lumian. "Didn't you say Madam

Magician was an Angel from the early Fifth Epoch, over a thousand years old? Why would she suddenly decide to write novels?"
"That was just my guess. Perhaps Mr. Door lived long enough and only perished in recent years, and Madam Magician was His youngest student," Lumian said, finding this both shocking and strangely amusing. He continued carefully, "Also, haven't you noticed? Because of the popularity of the Great Adventurer series, Mr. Fool's avatar Gehrman Sparrow has gained a large number of worshipers. To use a term I heard before, Gehrman Sparrow has acquired many anchors."
"Was The Great Adventurer series written by Madam Magician at the behest of the Church of The Fool, as a form of evangelism?" Franca had a sudden realization.
Lumian nodded. "And perhaps Madam Magician's current sequence requires her to play the role of an 'author'."
"It's possible," Franca suddenly became excited, "Next time we meet Madam Magician, we should ask for her autograph. Wow, would an Angel's signature have some special effects..."
Before she finished speaking, Franca and Jenna simultaneously turned to Lumian and asked in unison, "What about those letters from before?"
"..." Lumian said with considerable regret, "I burned them."
Jenna shared his regret but said with anticipation, "When we return to the real world, we can ask Madam Magician about the future developments of The Great Adventurer, when the next book will be out, and if Frank Lee, the first mate of the Admiral of Stars, is really that exaggerated..."
As they chatted, Lumian dispelled the Mirror Maze.
The three of them glanced at the long queue for the book signing, then turned with Anthony and Ludwig to the nearest escalator and went up to the fourth floor.
"What movie should we watch?" Franca scanned the promotional posters, her eyes suddenly lighting up, "Let's watch 'The Great Pirate 3'!"
"Alright," Lumian agreed immediately.
It would be a good opportunity to see what Gehrman Sparrow looks like in Mr. Fool's dream!
Franca, who had just won a significant amount from lottery tickets, generously bought five seats in a row, three buckets of caramel popcorn, and five cups of iced cola.
Ludwig had a bucket of popcorn to himself, Franca, Jenna, and Lumian shared one, and Anthony and Ludwig shared another.
After entering the cinema and finding their corresponding seats,

before Franca could allocate, she found that Lumian and Jenna had left a space between them for her.
I thought Lumian would sit in the middle himself... Franca sat down happily between Lumian and Jenna. Ludwig sat right next to Lumian, with Anthony on Ludwig's other side.
Crunch, crunch, Ludwig kept tossing popcorn into his mouth, occasionally sipping his iced cola, completely ignoring the images on the screen.
After a few minutes, the opening credits began: howling winds, a dark sea surface, waves sometimes rising high enough to seemingly touch the sky, sometimes sinking into huge maelstroms.
Jenna's gaze was immediately captivated, as if she herself were in this terrifying scene showcasing the power of nature.
"The special effects are not bad," Franca commented briefly.
She wasn't as impressed as Jenna because she had seen many blockbusters before her transmigration. Moreover, during the Marriage of the Sea ceremony in Port Santa, she and Lumian had personally witnessed and experienced an even more exaggerated maelstrom than a shipwreck, which was beyond comparison to these special effects.
Lumian's gaze focused on the three pirate ships sailing out of the storm and the female pirates standing at the bow.
"That Vice Admiral Iceberg looks about seventy to eighty percent like Principal Ai from Dream Tutoring Classes..." Jenna recognized one of the female pirates, as she seemed to be modeled after Principal Ai Nana from Dream Tutoring Classes.
Hearing Jenna's words, Lumian slightly furrowed his brow.
The Vice Admiral Iceberg in the movie looked very similar to the demigod he had seen in the dungeon of the Church of Knowledge!
Was that the former Vice Admiral Iceberg—Edwina? Lumian suddenly realized.
"The casting for this movie is quite true to the original," Franca sighed.
Then, her gaze froze, and she pointed at another female pirate, saying in a low voice, "Who do you think she resembles?"
Lumian fell momentarily quiet before responding, "Ma'am Hermit."
"Ma'am Hermit's true identity is the Admiral of Stars, no, Queen of Stars Cattleya? No wonder the latest installment of 'The Great Adventurer' described the events between her and Gehrman Sparrow so cautiously..." Jenna murmured.
They all fell into silence again.
At this moment, the scene changed, and a man appeared amidst the storm and lightning.

The man wore a black trench coat and a half-top hat, standing on the surging waves, slowly raising his previously lowered head.
In Lumian's eyes, this man seemed to be carved from Zhou Mingrui as the original prototype, but sharper and colder. Even wearing gold-rimmed glasses, he could make people involuntarily close their mouths.
Gehrman Sparrow!
The protagonist of this installment of the Great Pirate series, Gehrman Sparrow!
With this, the opening credits ended, and the main feature began.
The initial close-up focused on a fish being roasted, with various spices being sprinkled on it.
Ludwig, who had spared a glance at the movie, suddenly raised his arm, pointing at the roasted fish on the screen, and said to his godfather, "I want to eat that!"
"Heh, ordering a meal now?" Lumian chuckled, grabbed a few pieces of popcorn, and stuffed them into Ludwig's mouth.

Chapter 930: Weekend Arrives

"Not bad, a qualified popcorn flick," Franca remarked sincerely after exiting the cinema, savoring the experience for a few seconds.

Beside her, the dispersing crowd poured into the now-closed mall, walking towards the still-operating elevators under dim lighting.

Jenna remained silent for a moment, then said with a mix of longing and dejection, "With movies now, will anyone still watch plays..."

Understanding why Jenna would say this, Franca replied in a comforting tone, "People still watch them. Plays and operas have different characteristics and charms compared to movies and TV shows. A large portion of people will still appreciate them, they just won't be the mainstream of society anymore.

"And besides..." Franca deliberately lightened her tone. "Theater actors are actors, and TV and film actors are actors too."

Jenna immediately fell into contemplation.

"That's true, but the performance setting has changed, and many acting techniques need to be altered, otherwise they'll seem exaggerated..."

As the dispersing crowd thinned out, Lumian thoughtfully said, "If the power of the Mother Tree of Desire can penetrate Mushu Hospital, wouldn't actors be easily influenced?"

"Uh..." Franca hesitated for a moment, then sighed, "It's possible. Some of them live lives of debauchery and overflowing desires."

Lumian nodded, holding Ludwig's hand as he followed the audience ahead towards the elevators still operating for cinema-goers to leave after the mall's closure.

Along the way, Franca found the environment very dim, with the few lights still on only illuminating the path and obstacles enough to prevent tripping and collisions.

"It has the atmosphere of a bizarre story," Franca hadn't forgotten that their outing tonight was to test the boundaries of the phrase "beware of the night". From the information provided by the Major Arcana card holders, she knew that Sequence 4 of the Seer pathway, which was also the The Fool pathway, was called Bizarro Sorcerer. So, she deliberately used "bizarre" to describe the story rather than "ghost".

Hearing this, Jenna, already highly alert, became even more vigilant.

Lumian, acting as if nothing was wrong, led Ludwig into the elevator. But when Franca and Jenna followed, he kept pressing the door open button and turned to smile at the others in the

elevator.
"Sorry, I still have a companion who hasn't come in yet."
The departing audience instinctively looked outside the door, finding the elevator lobby empty and no footsteps approaching from afar.
Their hearts suddenly suspended.
Lumian released the button and smiled at everyone. "Alright, he's in now."
The gazes of others in the elevator suddenly froze.
They hadn't seen anyone enter the elevator.
Slap! Franca patted Lumian's shoulder, saying amusedly, "Feeling happy about playing a prank, aren't you?"
After entering the dream city, influenced by online information and daily environment, she gradually recovered the tone and manner of speaking of a "local".
After the playful scolding, she quickly apologized to the others in the elevator, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, my friend's brain often has spasms; please forgive his poor mental state."
The initially angered audience members, seeing such a beautiful woman sincerely apologize, felt embarrassed to make a fuss, but still turned their gaze towards Lumian.
He should apologize himself!
Lumian immediately bowed slightly.
"I'm sorry, my joke went too far."
The people in the elevator looked over Franca and Lumian, some feeling sorry that such a flower had found a mentally unstable young man, others thinking the young man's face was wasted and wanting to crowdfund treatment for his brain.
At this moment, the elevator doors slowly closed, descending.
Suddenly, the lights inside the elevator started flickering.
Everyone's hearts leaped to their throats.
Franca and Jenna were reminded of the phrase "beware of the night", while others recalled Lumian's prank earlier.
Fortunately, the flickering lights didn't affect the elevator's operation. Some audience members left on the first floor, while others, along with Lumian's group, went to the underground parking lot.
Back in the rented gray sedan, Franca didn't remark that "everything was still normal, it was just an interlude within an interlude".
She firmly resisted any behavior that might raise flags.
She turned to Lumian and asked curiously, "Why did you suddenly pull that prank earlier?"
Lumian chuckled.

"At that moment, I suddenly thought, what if Anthony's Psychological Invisibility' became uncontrollable, wouldn't something similar happen? So I tried it out."
Hearing Anthony's name, Franca and Jenna quickly turned to look at the back seat.
Seeing Anthony, they both quietly sighed in relief.
Thank goodness, he did get in the car.
I remember him getting in!
Lumian continued, "Besides, a not-too-excessive prank like that in a relatively enclosed environment like an elevator, combined with the night factor, might allow us to experiment with some things without drawing too much attention."
"Did you find out anything?" Franca pressed.
"I'm not sure if the subsequent flickering of the elevator lights was a product of the experiment," Lumian replied thoughtfully.
"Does that count?" Jenna felt it was just a simple mechanical failure that didn't lead to anything unusual afterward.
Lumian chuckled.
"Don't you think the elevator light flickering made it feel more like a bizarre story?
"The prank I pulled was also intentionally developing in the direction of a bizarre story."
Franca, who had driven the car out of the parking space, suddenly realized.
"Is this based on the description of Bizarro Sorcerer in the materials, to see if it could trigger the instincts of the dream subconscious and bring about certain controllable changes?"
"This is more likely to happen at night, which belongs to the more evil and unpleasant side of the dream." Lumian had similar thoughts before going out.
They didn't dare to do more experiments and returned to their rented community by car, fearing to stimulate the Celestial Worthy and draw His gaze.
Nothing happened along the way.
Back in the rental apartment, Lumian looked around and said, "Preliminarily, it seems that if we don't interact with Mr. Fool and important dream figures, or investigate mystical issues, it doesn't seem likely for us to encounter anomalies even if we head out at night.
"Of course, this is just the result of one night's experiment and can't be turned into a conclusion yet. It needs to be repeated multiple times for verification."
Franca and Jenna sighed in relief, their spirits less tense.
Ludwig's face showed joy. "Does that mean we can go out for

barbecue now?"
Franca glanced at the naive little boy and grumbled inwardly,
The main reason we don't take you out for barbecue at night isn't "beware of the night", it's poverty!
...
Weekend, in the rental apartment.
A blackboard formed of frost was attached to the wall, its surface pinned with sketches and photos, each surrounded by sticky notes of different colors with words and descriptions.
These sketches and photos corresponded to different target personnel. White sticky notes contained the squad's observations, and for comparison, relevant content from the materials provided by the Major Arcana card holders was excerpted and recorded on light green sticky notes, placed adjacent to the white ones on the frost board.
Having his Conspirer ability suppressed to Sequence 7, Lumian stood before this frost blackboard in order to reduce the burden on his brain, rubbing his chin and looking back and forth, trying to find potentially problematic details that the Major Arcana card holders might have missed.
"No particularly valuable findings, except for that unfortunate incident," Franca shook her head after reviewing seven or eight times.
Anthony nodded in agreement.
Jenna looked at her phone and said, "We should go to Dream Tutoring Classes now."
Ludwig, who was watching cartoons and constantly "ordering" based on the cartoon content, immediately looked crestfallen.
"Mm." Lumian withdrew his gaze and stuffed the frost blackboard into Jenna's Traveler's Bag.
After parking the car diagonally opposite Dream Tutoring Classes, Lumian led Ludwig out of the car.
He said to Franca, Jenna, and Anthony, "From now on, keep your distance from me and Ludwig. Don't call, don't send messages. Ludwig and I won't be coming back tonight either. We'll regroup with you tomorrow morning after confirming there are no issues."
Franca and the others nodded solemnly, without objection.
This was because Lumian might soon encounter Mr. Fool's dream image, Zhou Mingrui, at Dream Tutoring Classes and have a brief exchange, which could potentially be discovered by the Celestial Worthy and result in being kicked out of the dream. Therefore, the team had to split up to avoid one person's ejection affecting the entire team.
Each person could only be kicked out of the dream three times,

absolutely no waste allowed!
After closing the car door, Lumian held Ludwig's hand as they crossed the street at the pedestrian crossing and entered Dream Tutoring Classes.
"Welcome, Li Lu," said the dark-skinned receptionist, recognizing Ludwig.
He didn't have a strong impression of the little boy, but rather of his mother.
Ludwig's face darkened, and he didn't respond.
The dark-skinned receptionist turned to look at Lumian. "He needs to sign in. You are?"
"I'm Li Lu's father," Lumian replied calmly.
The dark-skinned receptionist was stunned.
It's one thing for Li Lu's mother to look young, but how is his father also so young?
Early love, early marriage, early childbirth, right?
After signing in, Lumian was led by the receptionist to the door of the Beginner English class.
The foreign teacher, Anderson, was already standing at the front of the classroom, a handkerchief covering his left fist, smiling at the room full of children.
"Guess what I can make appear?"
"A flower!" "A ping pong ball!" "A panda!" The children happily played along.
Anderson removed the handkerchief, revealing nothing.
"I made air appear!" he announced loudly.
The children let out mocking sounds, but Anderson remained smiling.
He saw Lumian and Ludwig at the door and walked over, saying to Lumian, "Are you here for the Beginner English class too?
"Although you're a bit old and your brain might be set, it doesn't matter. Wanting to learn is always a good thing, of course, good things don't necessarily lead to good results."
"I'm Li Lu's father," Lumian pointed at Ludwig, not at all provoked.
He took the opportunity to say, "Mr. Anderson, can I add you on WeChat? If Li Lu doesn't behave well, you can contact me anytime."
Anderson looked at Lumian for a few seconds, then smiled. "Okay."
Through scanning the code, Lumian added Anderson Hood's WeChat.
The foreign teacher's WeChat name was "A name that leaves a deep impression on you".

Chapter 931: Inquiry

Lumian stepped back two paces and sat down on the waiting bench outside the classroom across the hall.

His fingers moved deftly as he accessed Anderson Hood's Moments feed.

"Yesterday: Other people's failures are my successes.

"August 14: Everyone has different talents. Some have a talent for language, some for art, some for being ordinary.

"August 13: My roommate really died. He got Game Over in this game called life.

"August 12: Love is also a kind of war. Hunters can also cull. To Da Nizi.

"August 11: As long as you don't get angry, others will get angry.

...

"August 2: Friend, you really scrolled down this far? Respect my privacy a bit!"

Lumian continued scrolling down expressionlessly, with no further content afterwards. Then, he saw a familiar yet slightly different prompt:

"—Only 30 days of Moments are visible—"

Lumian chuckled, brought the phone close to his mouth, and sent Anderson a voice message, briefly introducing himself to see if Anderson would respond and whether his reply might have a hidden meaning.

After sitting for another two minutes, he saw someone approaching from the direction of the reception desk.

The person was wearing a white T-shirt, blue jeans, and light-colored sneakers. His short black hair was neatly combed, and he had deep brown eyes behind a pair of half-rimmed, light gold glasses. His facial features were gentle, with a hint of handsomeness. He was carrying a black shoulder bag and was the main target of Lumian and his team's journey into the dream—Zhou Mingrui, the dream manifestation of Mr. Fool.

Lumian looked up as if he had just noticed the footsteps, directing his gaze towards Zhou Mingrui.

He realized that the current Zhou Mingrui was more distinct from Gehrman Sparrow: both had originally come from the same Zhou Mingrui, but their paths had diverged significantly—one leaning towards a gentle and handsome style, the other emphasizing sharpness and coldness.

Zhou Mingrui noticed Lumian's gaze and looked in his direction.

Lumian smiled and nodded slightly.

Zhou Mingrui paused, unsure why this stranger was greeting him,

but he politely nodded back.
Lumian withdrew his gaze and refocused his attention on the still-dark phone screen.
He noticed that while his reflection could still be considered handsome, it no longer had the kind of allure that would attract a celebrity scout's attention.
He had adjusted his appearance with Lie, toning down his looks to blend in more naturally.
Zhou Mingrui gave him a puzzled glance before turning and entering the Business English class.
After a few more minutes, Ai Nana, the principal of Dream Tutoring Classes, entered the Business English classroom with her lesson plan, while a man wearing a floral bow tie went to the Beginner English class to assist Anderson Hood.
Lumian glanced at the camera on the ceiling, then, like most of the parents waiting in different areas of the hallway, he spent time on his phone.
A few of the parents who knew each other chatted.
"My Zihan can have conversations in English now."
"Really? Ours started Beginner classes too late; still working hard on it."
"Look at that kid; he hasn't stopped talking."
"Probably his first day of class. It happens. My Zihan was a bit unsettled at first too. This is when parents need to step in more."
"..."
Lumian paid no attention to these conversations, focusing intently on the photos he had taken of the frost-covered blackboard, once again immersing himself in the conspiratorial world of analyzing details.
Occasionally, he also checked local news and trending videos to stay updated on major changes in the dream city.
The Beginner English class took two breaks, during which Ludwig took the opportunity to come over and replenish his food supplies, soothing his wounded spirit.
The Business English class only took one break, but Lumian didn't approach Zhou Mingrui, merely watching him from the corner of his eye as he briefly went to the restroom and returned.
The Business English class ended ten minutes earlier than the Beginner class, and Lumian quickly stood up, blocking Zhou Mingrui's path.
With a smile, he said, "Hello, how do you find the Business English class? I'm curious."
Seeing the confusion on Zhou Mingrui's face, Lumian explained further, "I'm here for my kid's Beginner English class, but after

listening in on your Business English class from outside, I thought it was pretty good. I'm considering joining too, so I won't waste time waiting."
"Here with your kid?" Zhou Mingrui instinctively questioned.
No matter how he looked, this man appeared much younger than him, like a college student.
And he already has a kid?
"Yes, my son," Lumian replied with a smile.
Son... a son old enough for a Beginner English class... Zhou Mingrui resisted the urge to twitch the corner of his mouth.
He had been out of college and in the workforce for two or three years now, and he didn't even have a girlfriend yet. Meanwhile, this guy who looked like a college student already had a four or five-year-old son!
Did he have a high school romance that led to a child?
Indeed, good-looking people have all the luck...
Zhou Mingrui sincerely replied, "Principal Ai is highly skilled, but the Business English class itself requires a certain foundation."
He suspected that this young man across from him might have dropped out of high school to get married and never attended college, so he kindly reminded him that the Business English class required some background knowledge.
"I see..." Lumian nodded thoughtfully, then sincerely said, "Thank you."
He took a step back and didn't ask Zhou Mingrui anything else.
For a first encounter, moderation was key!
Then, he would observe any subsequent developments.
Zhou Mingrui was curious but wasn't one to pry into others' private lives. He stood at the doors of different classrooms, observing.
After a while, the Beginner English class ended, and Lumian quickly handed Ludwig a lollipop, taking his hand and leading him out of Dream Tutoring Classes.
Ludwig looked to be around seven or eight years old. If Zhou Mingrui saw him, he would definitely be left with a deep impression—an eight-year-old son with a father who seemed to be in his early twenties. Someone in this family must have broken the law!
Leaving a deep impression on Mr. Fool's dream manifestation wasn't part of Lumian's plan today; it wouldn't help in ruling out options.
After buying a bunch of steamed buns and pickled vegetables to fill Ludwig's stomach, Lumian had a proper dinner with the boy and then checked into a cheap hotel.

He turned on the TV for Ludwig, randomly picked a cartoon, and scrolled his phone, his thumb hovering over Anderson Hood's WeChat avatar.
Ultimately, he didn't send another message to this "foreign teacher" who seemed to perceive the true nature of the dream, opting to see if Anderson would take the initiative to contact him and provide any clues.
...
In the rental apartment.
Franca was leaning against the bed, scrolling through her phone, but her thoughts weren't entirely focused on it. She was worried about how things were going on Lumian's end.
Formally engaging Zhou Mingrui could bring about unwanted changes!
Jenna felt the same, pacing back and forth in the room from time to time.
Suddenly, Franca sat up straight, frowning.
"I keep feeling like I've forgotten something...
"Is this my spiritual intuition reminding me?"
The next second, without needing divination, she quickly remembered what she had forgotten.
"Right! Today's the day for the Double Color Ball lottery draw!
"I completely forgot!"
She hurriedly checked the results, her mouth slowly opening in disbelief.
"We won?" Jenna asked, both curious and excited.
"We won... we won!" Franca was first dazed, then overjoyed. "We won the second prize which had twenty bets, with a total prize of more than 150,000 yuan."
She then rubbed her face.
"Do I really have this kind of luck?
"No, could Lumian's ability to influence fate still have this effect?"
"Over 150,000?" Jenna was stunned.
These past few days of living frugally had made her quite content with even a few thousand yuan, and now, all of a sudden, it was in the tens of thousands, with two digits in front of those zeros!
Franca got off the bed and started pacing.
"If we save a bit more, we could rent some of those intriguing items from Star Dream Provisions Store."
"Shouldn't we first think about paying off the micro-loans?" Jenna reminded Franca.
"We haven't reached the due date yet." Franca's excitement was tinged with worry. "Winning such a large sum at once, won't it attract the lottery department's attention? Or even the Celestial

Worthy's gaze..."
Before Jenna could respond, Franca continued speaking to herself.
"It's only a little over 100,000. What is that? The person who won the first prize had made more than thirty bets, each worth 5 million! We're just nibbling on the crumbs that slipped through someone else's fingers..."
...
In Binzhi Hotel.
After supper, Ludwig had fallen asleep on the other bed, while Lumian lay awake, leaning against the pillow, silently watching the dark screen and the room faintly illuminated by moonlight.
So far, Anderson hadn't sent him any messages, and directly interacting with Zhou Mingrui hadn't led to any noticeable abnormalities—his actions were unrestricted, and he hadn't been ejected from the dream.
As time ticked by, Lumian suddenly heard a booming thunderclap and saw the night sky outside the curtains briefly illuminated by a flash of silver lightning.
The thunder rumbled continuously, and rain poured down all night, only easing at dawn.
Lumian stayed awake the whole night, greeting the daylight with a clear mind.
He checked his phone and saw numerous reports of flooding and waterlogged areas, with some subway lines suspended for the day.
Is this symbolic? And if so, what does it symbolize? After stuffing Ludwig with a bunch of steamed buns, Lumian took him out for noodles nearby.
He ordered pea paste noodles for himself and tomato and egg noodles for Ludwig.
The peas were stewed until soft and tender, absorbing the sauce, making the noodles fragrant and flavorful. Lumian ordered two small bowls, ate one and a half, and left the remaining half for Ludwig.
After breakfast, he leisurely took public transportation back to the rental apartment with Ludwig.
Seeing that Lumian and Ludwig were fine, Franca, Jenna, and Anthony sighed in relief.
Lumian smiled and said, "The preliminary result of the experiment is that simple daytime contact with Mr. Fool's dream manifestation, Zhou Mingrui, without leaving a strong impression, doesn't attract the Celestial Worthy's attention, result in being ejected from the dream, or impose restrictions.
"Of course, maybe I've been deceived, and the Celestial Worthy is deliberately not targeting me, waiting for me to regroup with you

before kicking us all out of the dream."

Chapter 932: Dreamscape Tendencies

Hearing Lumian's words, Franca and the others couldn't help but tense up slightly, as if they were already witnessing the arrival of something terrifying.

Lumian pulled up a chair and sat down, casually scanning every corner of the room. With a smile playing at the corners of his mouth, he said, "I wonder what it feels like to be kicked out of a dream. The Major Arcana card holders didn't provide any details.

"Will it be like leaping out of the deep sea, or getting booted into an endless spiral tunnel..."

He mused about how he might be ejected from the dream, his tone light, as if he were simply describing what he had for breakfast.

Franca suddenly felt a bit sentimental.

"Are all you Hunters like this? Facing danger without fear, and even joking about it?"

"Of course, I'm scared, but what good is pure fear?" Lumian chuckled. "No matter how frightened I am inside, I'll act like it's no big deal, and I certainly won't let my words betray any weakness."

Franca laughed.

"No wonder they say the toughest thing about a Hunter is their mouth."

Both Lumian and Jenna turned to look at Franca without saying a word.

"..." Franca froze.

Damn it, I didn't mean to make a crude joke!

She quickly added, "In this dream city, they say that those who can keep their composure amid great turmoil are worthy of being generals!"

Lumian's lighthearted comments eased the tension in the group.

Then, Lumian smiled again.

"Getting kicked out of the dreamscape isn't scary. We can try again. What's frightening is if the Celestial Worthy restricts us, sends his subordinates, and kills us in the dream. Then there's nothing left."

Jenna pondered his words and asked, "So you're saying that if things really go wrong, we should leave the dream early?"

"Pretty smart." Lumian leaned back in his chair, took out his phone, and swiped the screen twice before stopping, staring at it for a long time without moving.

Franca glanced at the screen and noticed it displayed the WeChat friend request interface.

"Thinking of adding Mr. Fool's QQ and WeChat with an alternate account?" she guessed immediately.

Lumian smiled wryly. "Yeah, but I can't think of a good reason. I'd

be rejected instantly.
"Maybe I should use, 'Do you want to learn the truth about the world and the secrets of supernatural powers?' as a request?
"Mr. Fool—or rather, Zhou Mingrui—right now is just an ordinary person who's recently taken the Assassin potion. He's felt the allure of supernatural power but doesn't know much about mysticism. He desperately needs guidance."
Anthony, who had also taken a seat, shook his head.
"If Zhou Mingrui discovers on his own that you can teach him real occult knowledge, even if it costs him money, he might add you. But if you actively and enthusiastically try to guide him, it'll have the opposite effect."
"Exactly." Franca nodded emphatically. "He might block you immediately. He could even call the police, like, 'Hello, officer? There's someone here promoting superstitions. Might be a cult member.'"
Lumian fell silent, deep in thought, muttering to himself, "Maybe I should create a mystery-themed video account, build a reputation, and wait for Zhou Mingrui to come to me.
"But that would risk exposure to the Celestial Worthy's gaze. If the account gets too popular, we'll be targeted. If it's too obscure, Mr. Fool won't notice. Unless... we use targeted ads?"
Franca twitched slightly.
This guy's adapting to the dream city and online society faster than I expected!
She spread her hands. "I don't have the technical know-how."
Lumian continued brainstorming. "Maybe we could stage a minor mysticism incident involving Mr. Fool's friends or colleagues, then solve it ourselves. Word would get back to Zhou Mingrui through them.
"It's also a way to test the Celestial Worthy's surveillance patterns. But we'd need to prepare for the person responsible for this to be detected and targeted. We should have them move out in advance and maintain contact with us using more discreet methods.
"Hmm, it's feasible. Worth a try."
Instead of assigning a specific team member to carry out the plan, Lumian turned to Franca.
"Time to submit our resumes."
To the Intis Group.
"Okay." Franca pulled out her phone.
She'd already prepared the resumes.
She applied for an administrative role, while Lumian applied for security.
Among the four of them, Franca was the only one with formal

qualifications, but her field was far removed from Zhou Mingrui's, so she couldn't apply to the same department. She had to choose a position that would allow frequent contact with him.
The other three? Anthony's cover was that of a retired soldier, Jenna was an arts student majoring in drama, and Lumian was a high school dropout who had learned some martial arts.
It wasn't that Madam Justice didn't want to forge academic credentials that could be verified online; even if she did, they'd be exposed during the interview.
They wouldn't be able to answer professional questions, and they might not even understand the questions!
For that reason, Franca chose to apply herself instead of sending Jenna, who, in theory, would have a better shot at an administrative position as an arts student.
After submitting the resumes, Franca looked at Lumian with a smile and asked, "I've got some good news. Can you guess what it is?
"Stop! No eye color changes!"
Lumian pondered for a few seconds.
"Did we win the lottery?"
There weren't many things that could be considered good news and could be shared in front of Anthony, so it had to be that.
"Guess how much?" Franca wasn't disappointed that Lumian had guessed it right away.
Lumian couldn't help but laugh.
"Miss, you bought so many tickets with the same number, and I've already looked up the minimum for the second prize. What do you think? Can I guess how much you won?"
Franca smiled sheepishly and said, "That's not the point. The point is, didn't you notice anything strange?
"When we fought the revived corpse, the hidden Marionettist didn't intervene. When we were outside Star Dream Provisions Store, someone warned us about technological methods of eavesdropping like devices and hidden cameras. And now, we've won a lottery ticket we staked twenty-plus times on.
"What's this called? Some force is helping us!"
Jenna, who had already discussed this with Franca, added, "We think it's an expression of Mr. Fool's subconscious tendencies within the dream. It's symbolic.
"Neither he nor the Celestial Worthy holds absolute dominance right now. During the day, he's stronger; at night, the Celestial Worthy is more powerful. But even at night, he's not entirely powerless."
Lumian nodded slowly.

"I did notice that fate thread was special but didn't think it would lead to a lottery win. Maybe 'special' itself was the hint from fate."
He found nothing in Franca and Jenna's theory that needed correction.
"Praise The Fool!" Franca stood up abruptly, placing her hand over her heart in a gesture of sincere reverence.
She continued, "Who's going to claim the prize today?"
She had already looked up the prize collection process online.
Lumian and Jenna both looked at Anthony, who nodded calmly.
If it were the three Demonesses, they would have to put on more disguises, but Anthony didn't need any.
Anthony nodded calmly. "I'll go."
At ten in the morning, when none of them had encountered any abnormalities, Lumian headed to the bedroom to catch up on sleep.
Franca drove the gray sedan, with Jenna, Anthony, and Ludwig in tow, following the navigation to the lottery center in the dream city.
As she drove, Franca gradually grew agitated, muttering, "Why do we hit a red light at every intersection?"
Jenna, in the passenger seat, pondered for a moment,
"Could this be the Celestial Worthy's dream tendency manifesting, symbolizing that our actions won't go smoothly?"
Franca calmed down, focusing more intently on her driving. She even relied on her Demoness's spiritual intuition to avoid accidents on the way to the lottery center, determined to avoid a "misadventure on the way."
Due to the unfortunate timing of red lights and traffic jams, they arrived nearly half an hour later than planned.
Before Franca could hand the lottery ticket to Anthony, she saw a figure leap from the rooftop of the lottery center and crash onto the ground with a sickening splat, blood pooling everywhere.
"Was that really necessary? All I won was the second prize..." Franca was dumbfounded.
Anthony got out of the car and mingled with the crowd to find out what had happened.
He returned shortly after and reported what he'd learned to his companions, "The person who jumped was the head of the lottery center. Fifteen minutes ago, the anti-corruption department showed up."
"To stop me from claiming the second prize, they sacrificed the head of the lottery center?" Franca didn't know what expression to make.
Undeterred, Franca sent Anthony into the center with the lottery

ticket, but the staff informed him that prize claims were suspended for the day and to return tomorrow.
Back in the gray sedan, after a brief silence, Franca gritted her teeth. "I was this close to winning big, and now they won't let me cash in!
"We'll bring Lumian tomorrow. Maybe we'll need to influence fate!"
When they returned to the rental apartment, Lumian was already awake.
After Franca recounted their ordeal, she asked concernedly, "Why are you up before noon? Shouldn't you sleep a bit longer?"
Lumian chuckled. "I was woken up by a phone call."
"Wow, you just got this number a few days ago, and you're already getting spam calls?" Franca joked knowingly.
Lumian shook his head. "No, it was from the Intis Group. They want me to come in for an interview tomorrow morning."
"An interview call this quickly?" Franca blurted out in surprise.
Why haven't I gotten one yet?
My resume is way better than Lumian's!
Lumian took out his phone, unlocked the screen, and handed it to Franca. "Maybe this is why."
Franca took the phone curiously, only to find a news article on the screen.
"During last night's thunderstorm, a car was struck by lightning, leaving one dead and three injured...
"The deceased and injured were all security personnel from the Intis Group..."

Chapter 933: New Residence

"What the hell? Can it really be this much of a coincidence?" Franca blurted out after extracting the key points from the news article.

Yesterday afternoon, Lumian made his first contact with the dream manifestation of Mr. Fool, Zhou Mingrui, and last night, during a thunderstorm, the Intis Group's security department suddenly lost four people?

Was this a chain reaction caused by the contact, or was someone pulling the strings behind the scenes?

"I wonder if this is a good sign or a bad one..." Jenna whispered worriedly after reading the news.

Lumian was quite composed. "Whether it's good or bad, becoming employees of the Intis Group and Zhou Mingrui's colleagues is something we have to do. If there's no problem, we go; if there is, we still go!"

Since the interview with the Intis Group was imminent, Lumian and the others went out after lunch to find a real estate agent and started looking for a new place to stay.

According to their plan, the next steps would involve working individually or in pairs to avoid interference and minimize risk. That way, if one of them was compromised, the others wouldn't be dragged down.

During the observation phase, the risks were minimal, so they could act together. However, once they entered the contact and probing stages, every move could draw the Celestial Worthy's attention.

This time, Lumian and his team chose Dechuang Garden, a community district three bus stops away from their current location. Only five years old, the complex had new facilities, and the area boasted a mix of well-known brands and trendy stores.

They picked this place because the information provided by the Major Arcana card holders indicated that Luo Shan, an employee in the Intis Group's administrative department with a real-world counterpart, lived here.

She was also a target for contact and probing.

The lobby of the community district had a clean, bright, and slightly luxurious feel, with sunlight reflecting off the marble floor and a few gray sofas arranged tastefully.

"A one-bedroom apartment costs two thousand a month," Jenna grumbled, heart aching, after the real estate agent and landlord left.

That's nearly as much as what they were paying for their current

three-bedroom unit.
The rent differences between various locations and building ages were staggering!
"It's expensive, but we have to rent it!" Franca gritted her teeth.
Tomorrow, we must claim that lottery prize!
This will be another six thousand in expenses!
Although both the landlord and the real estate agent were men, Jenna hadn't used Charm during negotiations. Instead, she relied on Lie and makeup to make herself appear more ordinary. With only a bit of help from her Instigation ability, she managed to negotiate two hundred off the rent and a prepayment of one month.
Lumian nodded slightly, agreeing with Franca's attitude.
In his view, as long as it was within their abilities, any necessary expenses should be made. No matter how much it hurt, they couldn't be stingy!
As his gaze swept the lobby, he noticed a vending machine in the corner. The bottles inside had a particularly sleek design.
Recalling the hints in their information, Lumian walked over and saw that aside from a few displayed bottles, the rest of the items were in gacha boxes.
And the names of these new drinks were all too familiar:
Seer, Assassin, Bard, Sleepless...
"They're all potion names..." Franca followed him over, inhaling sharply. "Do you think they're the real thing?"
She also recalled the dossier's mention of the Fully Automated Vending Machine and Fully Automatic Wishing Machine.
Lumian studied the vending machine for a few seconds, then chuckled.
"The highest is only Sequence 7, and the selection isn't vast. If there were something like War Bishop or Demoness of Unaging, I'd be tempted to empty this machine for a few thousand."
"Even if they were available, you couldn't digest them." Franca pulled out her phone, ready to scan the QR code on the screen.
She eagerly said, "Let's see what I get."
"Based on the Law of Beyonder Characteristics Convergence, you'll probably get something related to Demoness or Hunter." Jenna calmly reminded her.
Franca laughed. "The point isn't what I get but pulling one out to test on a rat to see if it's a real potion."
As she spoke, Franca completed the scan and paid five yuan.
With a click, a gacha box was ejected into the pickup slot.
Franca retrieved and opened it, revealing a bottle with a deep black surface and raised areas outlining a snarling wolf's face:

"Sleepless!"
"Huh, one from the Evernight pathway?" Franca was surprised. "It's neither Hunter nor Demoness?"
She quickly figured out the reason.
"My Sequence isn't high enough, nor do I possess godhood. The convergence effect isn't that strong."
After storing the Sleepless drink in her Traveler's Bag, Franca suddenly burst into laughter.
"You know, a Sleepless drink could probably be made with enough caffeine and theophylline!"
The group didn't linger by the vending machine. They crossed the lobby and headed towards Building 5—where their new apartment was located.
Before leaving the lobby, Lumian had a sudden impulse and instinctively glanced back at the vending machine.
The corner it occupied was now empty.
The vending machine that sold potion beverages had vanished!
"As expected..." He wasn't surprised at all.
Franca and the others followed his gaze and shared the feeling that the inevitable conclusion had finally arrived.
...
In the evening, after settling into Dechang Garden, Jenna sat in the lobby of Building 5, patiently waiting for their target to appear.
She didn't know how long it took, but eventually, through the glass entrance, she spotted the figure she'd been observing earlier.
Jenna stood up naturally, tucking a stray lock of hair behind her ear.
She paced back and forth until a twenty-plus girl walked in. She had brown hair and a pleasant face, wearing a light green dress and carrying a white handbag.
Jenna "coincidentally" found herself face-to-face with her and asked, feigning a shy and surprised expression, "Hello, do you know how to get to the activity room in this district?"
The girl in the green dress was indeed Luo Shan, Zhou Mingrui's colleague and an employee of the Intis Group's administrative department. She kindly pointed in a direction. "Go out the East Gate, and it's on the left."
"Thank you." Jenna expressed her gratitude sincerely with a slight smile.
She had removed her previous makeup and used Charm, suppressed to a Sequence 7 level, to enhance her appearance.
The smile, like a bloom of flowers, caught Luo Shan's eye.
Luo Shan blinked, showing an expression of admiration. "You're so beautiful..."

Before Jenna could modestly decline, Luo Shan asked enthusiastically, "Would you model for me?
"I'm learning to paint in my spare time, and I'm pretty good at it. I especially love painting beautiful people and landscapes.
"I'll pay you!"
Painting... Jenna's temples throbbed, stirring unpleasant memories.
To her, a "painter" was a terrifying occupation.
She had once killed her painted self in a painting world.
Has Luo Shan in this dream been corrupted or influenced by that evil god of the Fantasy Association? Jenna instinctively shook her head.
"Sorry, I'm not interested in modeling at the moment."
"That's such a shame. I'm pretty good, you know. I'll show you my work sometime, and maybe you'll change your mind." Luo Shan pulled out her phone, smiling as she asked, "You just moved in, right? I've lived here for years and never met anyone as beautiful as you. Can I add you on WeChat?"
Jenna had planned to find an excuse to add Luo Shan on WeChat, but not this quickly. Moving this fast seemed off!
After a few seconds of deliberation, she said with hesitation, "I'm just a tenant."
"So what? I was a tenant too." Luo Shan didn't mind.
"Alright." Jenna deliberately made herself appear a bit meek, someone who wasn't good at rejecting others' kindness or enthusiasm.
When adding her on WeChat, Jenna selected the "Chat Only" option.
This was to make it seem like she wasn't too willing to add strangers, avoiding giving the impression that she was actively seeking out Luo Shan.
After taking a walk around the activity room outside the East Gate and grabbing a meal at a nearby restaurant, Jenna noticed that it had grown dark.
She returned to the 23rd-floor apartment and locked the door.
For the next day or two, she would be staying there alone.
After turning on the star-shaped main light, Jenna's gaze swept over the gray and orange sofa, the minimalist yet stylish decor, the metallic sheen of the window frames, and the bed with light-colored sheets, just visible through the bedroom door.
Compared to the three-bedroom unit Lumian and the others were renting, this one-bedroom apartment was obviously newer, better furnished, and simpler in design yet still elegant.
Jenna walked towards the window, her fingers brushing over the

white dining table, the textured wallpaper on the walls, the artistic table lamp, the tall vase with plastic flowers, and the cold edge of the window. She gazed outside.
Buildings of varying heights dotted the crisscrossing roads, with most windows glowing warmly, blending with the lights from the endless stream of cars on the streets below.
"How beautiful..." Jenna admired the view from above with heartfelt appreciation.
She returned to the sofa area, her steps a little lighter.
When we have more money, let's rent a place like this for Lumian, Franca, and the others!
Jenna sat down, peacefully waiting for any anomalies that might arise from her contact with Luo Shan.
Time ticked by as she scrolled through her phone.
She came across a review of the movie The Great Pirate 3: "Three beautiful female pirates surrounding him, each with some history of flirtation, yet he only took the dumb sailor with him? What the hell! I want my money back!"
Jenna was momentarily puzzled by the comment.
She didn't see anything wrong with that scene.
From the start, she knew how it would end: Gehrman Sparrow was an incarnation of Mr. Fool, his Oracle, who naturally met up with Mr. Fool's other Oracle, Danitz, before leaving together. Wasn't that the logical conclusion?
Besides, in reality, Gehrman Sparrow didn't end up with any of the three female Pirate Admirals!
Jenna felt the real flaw in that scene was how Danitz, the Oracle, didn't play a significant role, as if he were a mere side character.
After spending nearly two hours on her phone with no sign of anything unusual, Jenna checked the time and stood up, heading towards the bathroom to freshen up.
As soon as she switched on the bathroom light, a buzzing sound suddenly filled the room.
The entire apartment was plunged into darkness.
All the lights went out.

Chapter 934: Guardian

Faced with the sudden darkness, Jenna's first instinct was to conceal herself or hide in the shadows. But ultimately, she controlled herself and refrained from immediately displaying her Beyonder powers when an anomaly occurred after nightfall.

Utilizing her acting skills, she pretended to be an ordinary person. Despite being able to see clearly, she groped her way out of the bathroom and towards the window.

Upon reaching the living room, thanks to the light pollution seeping in from outside, the outlines of the coffee table, sofa, and other furniture became visible. Jenna immediately quickened her pace, reaching the window in seconds. Looking outside, she found that not only were the distant buildings of varying heights still brightly lit, but the other buildings in the same complex had not been completely engulfed by darkness either.

Jenna glanced downwards, feeling that the other floors seemed to have their lights on as well.

"Is it just my place with the problem? Hmm, a power outage?" Jenna took out her phone from her jeans pocket, intending to call Franca to ask how to handle this situation.

She then remembered that she was supposed to act independently for these two days and couldn't contact her teammates. So instead of making a call, she decided to search online.

Somewhat clumsily, she used voice-to-text to input the phrase "what to do if there's a power outage at home" and pressed the search option.

Then, remembering Franca's advice, she skipped the first few search results and went straight to the ones further down.

"First, check the fuse box during a power outage...

"The steps are as follows..."

Jenna read for a while, her brow gradually furrowing.

This is so difficult!

These were all areas she didn't understand.

As she scrolled, she came across an answer: "Contact property management!"

"..." Jenna was stunned. "You can do that?"

She had registered with property management when she moved in that afternoon and added their number to her contacts list.

She tried calling, reported her room number and the issue. The on-duty property management staff immediately said that an engineering department employee would come to address the problem right away.

Soon after, the doorbell rang. The property management staff from

the engineering department arrived on this floor, carrying a toolbox.
Upon seeing Jenna, the staff member's eyes lit up, and his attitude became quite enthusiastic.
Jenna, extremely vigilant, let him into the room.
She remained on guard for any anomalies.
After a quick inspection, the property staff said, "It was just a tripped circuit breaker."
With that, he flipped the switch, and light was instantly restored to the room.
That simple? Jenna didn't let her lack of knowledge show.
After seeing off the property staff and closing the door again, she couldn't help but remark, "Life in this dream city is so convenient... Just that the property management fees aren't cheap..."
Jenna quickly washed up and lay down on the bed, falling asleep like an ordinary person would, but that string in her spirit remained taut, never relaxing.
In her hazy state, her spiritual intuition brought a warning.
She suddenly became alert and found herself floating above the residential complex in her Spirit Body form.
Many spirits were wandering around, seemingly residents of Dechuang Garden. Layer upon layer of storms were frozen in the high air, completely enveloping this area, forming a semi-transparent barrier around the perimeter.
Near the barrier stood a figure—it was Luo Shan, wearing her light green casual dress with dyed brown hair. In front of Luo Shan, strange figures emerged one after another from the depths of darkness, constantly lunging at the frozen storms and semi-transparent barrier, trying to enter the "residential district".
Some of these figures were half-human, half-snake, with the upper body of an alluring woman and the lower body a thick python tail covered in slick scales. Some looked like miniature humans embedded between an owl's wings, growing sharp talons. Others were young, naked women with long hair, freely displaying their voluptuous figures...
Facing the invasion of these strange creatures, Luo Shan took out a rather thick oil painting brush and quickly began sketching patterns on the semi-transparent barrier.
She was drawing suns surrounded by flying birds.
As soon as this simple painting took shape, the suns within lit up with a golden, brilliant radiance, causing all the monsters to simultaneously close their eyes.
Then, each of the birds burst into golden flames, flying out of the semi-transparent barrier towards different monsters.

Seeing this scene, Jenna was shocked and deeply puzzled.
The current situation was quite different from what she had imagined.
Luo Shan seemed to be fighting against those strange creatures, preventing them from entering the spirit world corresponding to Dechuang Garden. She looked like a guardian.
But the abilities she displayed clearly belonged to a Painter, which was a boon from that evil god of the Fantasy Association!
Luo Shan should be cooperating with those strange creatures to invade the spirit world of the residential district, so why is she protecting the barrier instead?
Moreover, back at Xinhong District, neither I, Lumian, Franca, nor Anthony discovered anything like strange creatures invading... Is this a change brought about by Lumian's formal contact with Mr. Fool's dream manifestation, or does Dechuang Garden itself have some special properties? Amidst her confusion, seeing that Luo Shan was guarding steadily enough, Jenna suppressed the idea of offering help and pretended to wander aimlessly within the barrier like the astral projections of other residents.
This continued until daybreak.
...
At Xinhong District, in a rented apartment.
Franca, who had woken up early out of concern for Jenna, saw Lumian, who had been on night watch, bring a small cage from atop the shoe cabinet to the dining table. Inside was a gray and white rat.
Ludwig's presence had eradicated rats, cockroaches, and other such creatures from the apartment. To test the effects of the potion beverage, Lumian and the others had specifically wandered around the complex before dark yesterday and finally caught one.
Franca sat down and watched as Lumian put on gloves and grabbed the rat, which was cowering in fear under Ludwig's predatory gaze, and began to pour the Sleepless beverage into it.
The rat only took one sip before the rest of the drink flooded into its body, completely disregarding whether it could contain that much.
In the blink of an eye, the rat suddenly swelled up, its short gray-white fur standing on end like a hedgehog's quills and turning black.
In its armpits and across its chest and belly, flesh writhed as if new limbs were about to sprout.
Has it lost control? This thought flashed simultaneously through Lumian and Franca's minds.
Ludwig opened his mouth in delight and swallowed the mutated

rat in one gulp.
Chew, chew, chew. He squinted his eyes in satisfaction.
"Is it okay to eat it like that?" Franca looked at Ludwig with some concern.
This food has Beyonder characteristics!
Ludwig replied with a muffled voice, "No problem, digesting characteristics, for now, just storing them..."
Lumian nodded, picking up the now empty Sleepless drink bottle and said, "This really is a potion."
Franca sighed emotively. "It's only at times like these that I truly feel this is a dream."
Everyday life is too real!
Looking up at the morning sky, Franca carefully asked Lumian, "You'll go for the interview in the morning, and we'll go claim the lottery prize together in the afternoon?"
"You go claim it in the morning," Lumian said with a smile, cutting off Franca before she could voice her question. "But I'll keep the lottery ticket."
Franca was enlightened.
"You mean, the bad luck of difficulty in claiming the prize, or rather the dream's resistance to this, is focused on the ticket itself, not on us?
"That makes sense. If the Celestial Worthy's resistance could precisely target us, we'd have been kicked out of the dream already.
"I see, Anthony and I will go to the lottery center without the ticket, as if we're just visiting. When we get to the step where we need to provide the ticket, you'll send it over through the mirror world, completing the claim before any resistance event occurs?"
"Exactly, and this is also to verify whether your speculation about the dream's tendencies really exists, and if it does, what are the rules of its operation." Lumian nodded lightly.
...
After breakfast, Lumian changed into a white shirt and black trousers, took the resume and other documents he had printed out yesterday, along with the lottery ticket, and took public transport to the Tech Building where the Intis Group was located. Franca drove Anthony and Ludwig to the lottery center.
In front of the Tech Building, Lumian looked up at the somewhat old-fashioned sixteen-story building, mixed in with the white-collar workers heading to work, and walked in openly.
His journey had been smooth, with no accidents like bus breakdowns or traffic jams due to carrying the lottery ticket—his destination was in the opposite direction from the lottery center.

Lumian didn't rush to go up for the interview. He came to the display board showing information for different floors and surveyed the company composition of this building.
The property rights of this building belonged to the Intis Group. The first to fifth floors were allocated to some subsidiaries of the Intis Group. The sixth to ninth floors were rented out to other companies. Half of the tenth floor belonged to the Intis Group's headquarters, while the other half was leased to Aurora Company. The eleventh and twelfth floors were also rented out. The thirteenth to fifteenth floors were other departments of the Intis Group's headquarters. The sixteenth floor was exclusively for Mr. Huang, the dream manifestation of Emperor Roselle.
It's indeed as Franca said, this building has obvious issues... The Intis Group could have recalled some departments and subsidiaries to occupy all sixteen floors, so why rent out some of them? Moreover, the headquarters' administrative and technical departments actually share a floor with the Aurora Company... In Franca's words, it's not right; a 120% chance of things being not right... Lumian pondered seriously.
When she got the information about this Tech Building, Franca had sensed the abnormality after just one look.
This didn't quite match the situation in her memory.
Lumian mulled it over for a dozen seconds, then silently said to himself, *Is this a symbol?*
Does this building symbolize the Intis Republic, with some floors being rented out symbolizing the infiltration of cults and different forces into the Intis Republic? Is this Mr. Fool's impression of the Intis Republic?
Lumian didn't linger too long. He withdrew his gaze and walked into the elevator area.
He occasionally glanced at the mirrored metal surface, waiting for Franca or Anthony to ring his phone a few times.
As the numbers indicating the elevator's floor slowly changed, someone else joined Lumian.
It was a very handsome and trendy middle-aged man with chestnut-dyed hair.
Mr. Huang? Lumian caught sight of the figure from the corner of his eye and recognized who it was.
It was the dream manifestation of Emperor Roselle, the boss of the Intis Group, Mr. Huang Tao, who often chose not to use his private elevator and instead joined the crowds in the employee elevator!

Chapter 935: Interview

Lumian didn't try to greet Huang Tao, still looking ahead until one of the elevators opened its doors.

The rush hour had already passed, and only a handful of people were waiting in the elevator area, entering in sequence.

Today, Lumian only wanted to succeed in the interview, hoping for no other incidents. He didn't plan to observe Mr. Huang or make further contact, so he chose the position furthest from Huang Tao, only politely nodding when their eyes met.

Mr. Huang was a celebrity among celebrities. It was impossible for those working or planning to work in this building not to recognize him. The others in the elevator had already greeted him in various ways, so Lumian couldn't completely ignore him.

Huang Tao, hands in his pockets, was casually chatting with a middle-aged man who seemed to be a department head from the Intis Group headquarters, showing no air of authority as a big boss.

As the elevator ascended, the others, including Lumian, got off at their respective floors, while Huang Tao went to the sixteenth floor.

His CEO office was actually near the administrative department on the tenth floor. The sixteenth floor had been arranged as a luxurious club for entertaining VIP guests and for his own relaxation.

There was even an indoor swimming pool there.

The beautiful secretary standing guard at the private elevator turned and said with a helpless smile,

"Mr. Huang, why are you competing with the employees for the elevator again?"

The four employee elevators generally couldn't reach the sixteenth floor, but Huang Tao could make them go up using card swipes, fingerprint recognition, or facial recognition.

Huang Tao didn't speak, smiling as he looked at the mature and beautiful female secretary, his gaze sweeping over every detail of her face.

The female secretary's heart trembled, and her voice lowered as she asked,

"Mr. Huang, is my makeup not done well?"

Huang Tao smiled.

"Beautiful things are worth appreciating."

Without waiting for the secretary's response, he walked directly towards the swimming pool, silently saying to himself,

My aesthetic taste hasn't changed, yet I actually thought a man

looked quite good just now...
...
Parking lot attached to the lottery center.
Franca, who was five minutes late due to traffic, turned to Anthony and said,
"No accidents so far."
She didn't say things like "This time it's really going smoothly" or "We should be able to claim the prize successfully today."
It's not too late to be happy when the money is in the account!
Anthony, who had been repeatedly educated by Franca about the prize-claiming process seven or eight times, nodded, opened the door, got out of the car, and walked towards the lottery center.
Franca, feeling a bit uneasy, tossed a lollipop to Ludwig.
"You wait for me in the car, don't go anywhere."
"Mm!" Ludwig bit down on the lollipop, first gnawing off the outer wrapper and swallowing it.
Franca left the vehicle in a running state to ensure the air conditioning continued to work.
She got out of the car, muttering,
"This is not good behavior. Parents, please don't learn from this. Don't leave children alone in the car. It's dangerous if you take out the key, and even more dangerous if you don't..."
But with Ludwig left in the car, it wasn't the child who was in danger, but the car and the surrounding pedestrians.
Franca then used the shadows cast by the morning sun to sneak into the lottery center, hiding behind an obstruction not far from Anthony.
She listened intently to the conversation between Anthony and the staff member, holding her phone, ready to call and correct his statements at any moment.
The staff member said to Anthony,
"First prize can't be claimed yet, but other prizes can be."
Is it really possible? The method of separating the ticket from the person really works... Or maybe the dream's tendency is actually targeting the person who won the first prize? Franca, hiding in the shadows, felt a surge of excitement as she listened.
After a few more exchanges, when the staff member asked for the lottery ticket, Anthony pretended to have something to do and took out his phone to call Lumian.
Tenth floor of the Tech Building, Intis Group headquarters, outside the "West Lognes" conference room.
Lumian sat on a chair with three other job applicants, waiting for the interview.
Suddenly, his phone rang.

Seeing that the caller was "An Ruide", he rejected the call and put his right hand into his trouser pocket.
There was a mirror about half the size of a palm and the second-prize winning lottery ticket.
Lumian first wrapped the ticket in layers of spider silk, then formed a layer of frost on the outside of the silk, and finally ignited Flames of Destruction on the surface of the frost.
After quickly completing these preparations, he pressed the ticket into the mirror.
The lottery ticket immediately fell into a tunnel of void darkness, plummeting towards the corresponding mirror.
Along the way, the quietly burning black flames, constraining destruction, slightly illuminated the depths of the mirror world, as if warning all unknown entities that dared to set their sights on the lottery ticket.
When the ticket reached the mirror carried by Anthony, the Flames of Destruction had already extinguished, melting the frost and the spider silk.
The intact lottery ticket emerged from inside the mirror, just as Anthony's extended hand pressed against it.
Anthony took out this lottery ticket and handed it to the staff member.
After receiving it, the staff member's hand retracted slightly, and he muttered to himself,
"It's been kept in a fridge all this time?"
...
Tenth floor of the Tech Building, outside the West Lognes conference room.
Lumian quietly breathed a sigh of relief.
It seems now that the dream tendency interfering with our prize claiming indeed comes from the Celestial Worthy. If Mr. Fool thought this matter was problematic and wanted to prevent Franca from claiming the prize, with the lucky coin for positioning, he wouldn't have been bypassed so easily...
After a while, Lumian's phone vibrated a few times.
He picked it up and saw that a friend with the WeChat name "True Hidden Blade" had sent several messages in a row:
"Successfully claimed the prize!
"We're rich now!
"Oh, by the way, the first prize can't be claimed yet."
First prize can't be claimed yet... Lumian suddenly felt puzzled, *Is the first prize winner an ally or an enemy?* Does the dream's obstructing tendency come from the Celestial Worthy or Mr. Fool?
His previous deductions suddenly became less certain.

Because it was also possible that Mr. Fool was obstructing Franca's prize claiming, but the purpose was to affect the person who won the first prize. He and his team were just caught in the crossfire. Today, whether the lottery ticket was separated from the claimer or not, it would have succeeded anyway.
As Lumian pondered, from the corner of his eye, he saw Zhou Mingrui passing by from afar, but Zhou Mingrui didn't pay attention to the interview here, engrossed in discussing something with Luo Shan.
"Next, Li Ming," the interviewer called Lumian into the conference room at this time.
Lumian entered calmly, politely greeted the two interviewers, one male and one female, and sat down in the chair designated for interviewees.
After asking a few routine questions, the female interviewer, about thirty years old, looked Lumian over.
"Why did you drop out of high school?"
"Puppy love," Lumian answered without any shame.
"Puppy love shouldn't lead to dropping out, right?" the male interviewer, who had also experienced puppy love, asked puzzledly.
"We had a child," Lumian calmly added.
The two interviewers were momentarily speechless, both lowering their heads to write down a paragraph about this with their pens, for later evaluation reference.
Lumian's eyes suddenly took on a silver-black hue.
He discreetly extended both hands, touching and amplifying the streams of fate favorable to him.
The two interviewers then wrote down similar words:
"Decent image, height exceeds standard, young and strong, married and had a child early, needs to support a family, values money quite highly..."
After writing this, the female interviewer further asked,
"How old is your child?"
"7 years old," Lumian answered truthfully.
"7 years old? Aren't you only about 22?" the male interviewer blurted out in surprise, "Didn't you say you had puppy love in high school?"
"I only said I dropped out of high school because of puppy love, not that the puppy love started in high school," Lumian explained seriously. "I had a child in the third year of junior high. By the second year of high school, both my parents had passed away, and I needed to support myself, my girlfriend, and our child, so I had to drop out."

The two interviewers looked at each other, not knowing how to evaluate this situation.
After about ten seconds, the male interviewer asked,
"Have you learned martial arts?"
"Do you need me to demonstrate?" Lumian inquired sincerely.
As he asked, his whole demeanor became slightly sharper.
"No need, I can sense it," the male interviewer felt that the applicant looked quite capable of fighting.
After asking about expected salary and other questions, the female interviewer said to Lumian,
"That will be all. Wait for our notification. If you don't receive a call in the next day or two, it means you haven't passed."
She spoke very frankly because this young man seemed approachable. Although he had dropped out of high school and had puppy love and a child early, he was very polite and had the looks for the job.
Lumian, who had lightly used Charm, stood up and politely said goodbye.
...
"La la la, la la la, I'm a little newspaper seller..."
Franca hummed a nursery rhyme cheerfully as she drove.
She had received the prize money of over 156,000 yuan, and because each bet didn't exceed 10,000 yuan, no tax was required.
Now, the team temporarily had no financial worries. Next, apart from contacting and probing relevant individuals, they would find ways to earn more money to rent one or two items from the Star Dream Provisions Store.
However, the idea of buying similar lottery tickets would have to be postponed for a while, as the hidden struggle behind winning and claiming prizes seemed quite intense!
Of course, they could continue to buy scratch cards, but they would have to frequently change lottery stores.
While envisioning the future, Franca's phone suddenly rang.
Wearing earphones, she chose to answer.
The call was from the human resources department of the Intis Group, asking Franca to come for an interview tomorrow morning.
Haha, when things go well, everything goes smoothly! Franca muttered to herself, extremely happy.
Later, she would have to use Lie and makeup techniques to make herself moderately less attractive, to avoid catching Mr. Huang's attention and being forced to resign and leave, unable to complete the task of contacting Zhou Mingrui.
But making herself less attractive didn't mean becoming truly ugly, just reducing her beauty to a certain extent. Otherwise, if the

appearance-focused Mr. Huang happened to wander into the administrative department one day and felt this employee wasn't good-looking, he might fire her on the spot. What then?

...

Dechuang Garden, Building 5, 23rd floor.

Jenna, who hadn't encountered any abnormal situations all day, leaned against the window, watching Luo Shan return to her residence wearing a women's shirt, pencil skirt with stockings and high heels, change into a casual dress, and leave the building again carrying a white handbag.

Chapter 936: Contradictions

Jenna didn't follow Luo Shan, knowing she would call a ride-hailing service. Whether using shadow stealth or invisibility, Jenna couldn't keep up with a car by running for long—unless the target encountered repeated traffic jams. In this respect, Demonesses excelled at bursts of speed but lacked endurance.

As for taking a taxi herself and having the driver follow the target, leaving aside whether a taxi would happen to pass by or if a booked ride could arrive within a minute, the biggest problem was finding a reasonable excuse.

Jenna believed that if Franca were here, with her understanding and familiarity with the dream city, she could easily find a convincing reason. But Jenna herself couldn't yet—she might say the wrong thing and cause the driver to call the police on the spot.

Of course, this problem could be solved using Charm, but after she got out of the car and the effect gradually faded, the driver would recall what happened and likely feel something was off, possibly reporting it to the police. Jenna couldn't repeatedly Charm someone over such a small matter, making them fall in love with her for an extended period.

Leaving the window, Jenna made a bowl of noodles and enjoyed eating it completely, drinking all the soup.

When night truly fell, she took out the Ice Mirror Charm made by Lumian and held it in her palm.

As she uttered the word "mirror" in ancient Hermes, the mystical charm carved from frost lit up with a somewhat dim glow.

Jenna placed her hand on the mirror she had put on the coffee table earlier. Her entire body suddenly dematerialized and entered it.

Using the Ice Mirror Charm's ability to sense surrounding mirrors, she quickly locked onto a mirror-like object in Luo Shan's home and traversed through a dark, illusory tunnel.

She wanted to take advantage of Luo Shan being out to search her home from within the mirror, seeing if she could discover anything.

The reason she didn't do this while Luo Shan was at work during the day was that such probing had to be gradual. She first needed to confirm whether last evening's level of contact with Luo Shan would attract the Celestial Worthy's attention or provoke investigation by hostile forces.

After waiting a day and night, she now tentatively confirmed it wouldn't, so she could proceed with further contact and investigation.

Jenna didn't leave the dark, illusory area behind the mirror. Through the hard, cold glass, she surveyed Luo Shan's home.
This apartment was also a one-bedroom, with the same layout as the one she rented. She was currently positioned at the living room window immersed in the night.
Above the window, Jenna's face faintly and indistinctly appeared, her gaze sweeping over the coffee table, TV, refrigerator, and other items.
She quickly noticed easels, canvases, paper, palettes, paint tubes, various brushes, and small palette knives scattered in different places. Paintings hung on the walls—vibrant oil paintings, pencil sketches, and black and white freehand landscapes.
Jenna's gaze suddenly stopped on one of the oil paintings.
It depicted a strange half-human, half-snake creature—the upper body a voluptuous woman, the lower body a giant snake with lifelike scales.
The monster I saw last night... Jenna's heart tightened as she successively recognized other paintings depicting bizarre creatures she had seen invading the "spirit residential district" woven from psychic energy during her astral projection last night.
Almost simultaneously, she noticed a common element in these paintings: All the strange creatures were confined in iron-barred cages.
What does this represent? Does it symbolize these monsters being kept out of the world? This is close to the scene I saw during my astral projection walk last night... Did Luo Shan paint the iron-barred cages, while the monsters came from someone else's hand? Or did Luo Shan paint these monsters but then lock them up? As Jenna pondered seriously, her gaze fell on a sketch.
It was Luo Shan's self-portrait, her face smiling, eyes spirited, quite charming.
For some reason, Jenna felt the Luo Shan in this self-portrait was intently observing the dark living room.
This made her abandon the idea of leaving the window glass and truly entering the room.
As Jenna continued observing, the fingerprint lock on the front door made a sound, and Luo Shan returned home carrying her white handbag.
After placing the handbag on the dining table, Luo Shan walked lightly to her sketch self-portrait and looked at it for a few seconds.
Then, she picked up a brush, dipped it in some silver paint, and walked towards the living room window.
Jenna had retreated a bit before the door opened, allowing the

glass window reflecting the night to return completely to normal.
Luo Shan stared at the glass window for a while, then raised her brush and outlined a simple door on its surface.
In the area behind the mirror, Jenna suddenly saw a silver light shine on the hard glass surface, forming a very real, strange door connecting reality and the mirror world.
She immediately left a few Demoness black flames to burn away any residual traces, then traversed the illusory dark tunnel herself, returning to her rented place and emerging from the mirror.
Where Jenna had originally been hiding, the not-quite-real silver door was pushed open, and Luo Shan entered the area behind the mirror.
The girl in a casual long dress looked around with a gloomy expression, finding nothing unusual in the area.
Luo Shan gazed at the dense spider web-like tunnels in the mirror, unable to think of what to paint to utilize them.
After two or three minutes, she exited the area behind the mirror and wiped away the silver door outlined on the glass window's surface with her palm.
...
23rd floor, Room 3.
Jenna sat on the sofa and silently muttered to herself, Luo Shan is indeed a Beyonder of the Painter pathway... Has the deity worshiped by the Fantasy Association also infused some power?
Is He also at Mu Shu Hospital, or does He have His own stronghold?
Did He give Luo Shan Beyonder power to control this colleague of Zhou Mingrui and contact Mr. Fool's dream image?
Just as she thought of this, Jenna's phone on the coffee table began to vibrate.
Jenna picked it up and saw that Luo Shan had sent her a message with an image.
This girl, whose WeChat nickname was "Always Wanting to Go on Vacation", said with a smiley face emoji: "This is my work, you can take a look."
The content of that image was precisely the sketch self-portrait Jenna had seen earlier in Luo Shan's home.
Jenna opened the image and suddenly had the illusion that Luo Shan had come to life on her phone screen.
She had an idea and just left her phone on the coffee table without locking the screen.
Then, she stood up, walked to the bathroom, and closed the door.
As soon as Jenna sat on the toilet, she immediately turned her gaze to the vanity mirror.
Using a Demoness's mirror magic and the mirror on the coffee

table, she peered at her phone's situation.
A few seconds later, Jenna saw the sketch portrait displayed on the screen seem to make a tiny movement. The Luo Shan outlined in pencil lines tentatively reached out a hand beyond the screen, then withdrew it.
As expected... Jenna pressed the toilet's flush button, washed her hands amid the rushing sound, and exited the bathroom.
She picked up her phone again, closed the image, and used voice-to-text to reply to Luo Shan: "It looks so lifelike!"
She hadn't checked Luo Shan's Moments last night because they were set to "Chat Only".
"Want me to sketch you too?" Luo Shan quickly replied to Jenna's praise.
I wouldn't dare let you Painters draw me... Jenna silently muttered, using voice input to respond to Luo Shan: "No need, no need."
She quickly changed the subject.
"You might not believe this, but I had a very strange dream yesterday, and you were in it.
"You seemed to be guarding the neighborhood, fighting a group of monsters, while we couldn't help at all."
If a man had said something similar to her, Jenna would definitely think he was trying to flirt, feeling their relationship was too shallow for such intimate talk, clearly inappropriate. But now, relying on the fact of both being women, she dared to probe a little.
"Did I leave such a deep impression on you?" Luo Shan sent a "smug" emoji.
After a few seconds, she sent a second message: "Your dream is very interesting. I'm also very happy to play such a role in your dream—really, extremely happy."
Just as Jenna was about to reply, Luo Shan sent a third message: "Because my father was a true guardian, as were his colleagues."
Jenna suddenly recalled the background introduction of Luo Shan in the files:
In reality, Luo Shan's father was a Nighthawk of the Church of Evernight Goddess, who died in an accident brought about by a mystical case. His father's colleagues included the Nighthawk team captain Dunn corresponding to Officer Deng, Officer Deng's fiancée Miss Daly, Old Neil from Interpol, and others. They all died in disasters brought by Beyonder powers but also protected their corresponding cities.
One of Mr. Fool's incarnations is Klein Moretti, a member of that Nighthawk team back then, so when Mr. Fool subconsciously wove

his dream image, did he add a similar background to Luo Shan, making her admire and aspire to the spirit of protection?
Although Luo Shan has now been influenced by that evil god of the Fantasy Association and received an illusory boon, has the protective obsession deep in her heart not been completely erased by the contamination? Is this the reason for her many contradictory behaviors currently?
Painting strange creatures on one hand, wanting to make them real, while adding cages to these invaders on the other... Constantly creating monsters on one hand, while guarding at the barrier on the other, not letting those monsters in...
Could this be considered Mr. Fool's subconscious projection onto Luo Shan fighting against the corruption of that evil god of the Fantasy Association?
If this is really the case, in a sense, this is a confrontation between a small part of Mr. Fool's subconscious and that evil god of the Fantasy Association... Jenna pondered with some understanding how to reply to Luo Shan.
After about ten seconds, she used voice input to say: "Have you ever created any paintings with a protective theme?"
It took Luo Shan twenty to thirty minutes to reply to this message: "Not yet. Failed."
If you haven't, then why did you fail? This answer is too contradictory... Jenna's pupils suddenly froze.

Chapter 937: Another Night

Jenna held her phone, wanting to reply to Luo Shan several times, but not knowing what to say.

Although she felt she should respond with something, to avoid appearing impolite, her spiritual intuition told her that saying the wrong thing at this moment could lead to unexpected consequences she didn't want to face.

In the end, Jenna put down her phone and watched TV, pretending not to have noticed Luo Shan's new message.

She alternated between immersing herself in the TV drama's story and instinctively criticizing some of the actors' performances.

This continued until eleven o'clock, when Jenna took a shower and washed her hair. She froze her wet hair with frost, then let the frost crack and fall to the bathroom floor, quickly drying her thick long hair this way.

Finally, she used a hairdryer to make her hair a bit fluffier, lay down on the bed, turned off all the lights, and slowly drifted off to sleep.

She wasn't used to falling asleep quickly through Cogitation. She preferred to let her thoughts wander freely before sleep, allowing them to fly unrestrained, to reminisce, to imagine.

In the dark room, Jenna's breathing finally became long and gentle.

The screen of her phone placed beside her pillow suddenly lit up.

The lit screen showed no incoming calls, messages, or system updates to run.

It only lit up for two or three seconds before going dark again, not triggering Jenna's spiritual intuition.

Not long after, the phone screen lit up again, still without any information displayed.

After alternating between lighting up and going dark three or four times, Jenna's phone returned to normal, with no more unusual activity.

Jenna's astral body once again saw the layers of frozen storms and the semi-transparent barrier formed by the storms. She saw numerous human shadows wandering in the virtual image of Dechuang Garden district, and strange creatures trying to enter this "spirit world residential district".

Like last night, Luo Shan guarded the semi-transparent barrier, sometimes using painting to create different supernatural effects to repel invaders, sometimes creating totem-like objects combined with strange chanting to directly affect various strange creatures...

After a while, the strange creatures retreated into the darkness.

Luo Shan sighed in relief and flew to the area where Jenna and other astral bodies were wandering.
Jenna tensed mentally, employing her acting skills to make her eyes show obvious bewilderment, losing their proper focus.
She allowed herself to be guided by spirituality, drifting about like a kite.
Luo Shan quietly observed her for twenty to thirty seconds, then descended beside her, following her unconscious "wandering" and said casually, "The monster with a human upper body and a python lower body is called Lamotte. They prey on humans, feeding on human spirits, internal organs, and blood...
"The monsters that look like offspring of owls and humans are called Morna. They like to kill children, especially human children...
"Those naked women and men are also monsters, subordinates of the Spirits of Lust, who like to suck the energy and life force of the opposite sex...
...
"Those Spirit Bodies also murder humans because they particularly love to cook and eat human internal organs..."
After introducing them one by one, Luo Shan's voice became low, as if talking to herself, "Don't ask me why I know these things..."
Jenna maintained her performance but took note of these words.
Luo Shan exhaled slowly and deeply, with a sense of relief from finally speaking out some of the things weighing on her heart, no longer as tormented as before, and not having to worry about revealing her own secrets. She flew back to the barrier, waiting for a possible second wave of invaders.
...
At Xinhong District, in a rented apartment.
Franca looked at Ludwig, who had changed into bear pajamas, and asked curiously, "What abilities did you gain after eating that Sleepless mouse?"
Ludwig yawned. "I can see things clearly in pitch darkness, sense dangers hidden in the dark, and my spirituality and strength have increased..."
"You didn't gain the ability to be energetic with only two hours of sleep each day?" Franca asked for confirmation.
Ludwig shook his head. "No."
That's good, that's good. Sleepless hunger sounds terrifying... Not sleeping and being bored, you can only eat... Well, you could also preview, study, review... Franca sighed in relief without hiding it, then said thoughtfully to Ludwig, "Because you haven't digested the Beyonder characteristics and truly completed the absorption, your

utilization of the Beyonder characteristics is still very rough, with great limitations?"
Ludwig nodded. "That should be the case."
"Then do you think you'll still have these changes when you return to reality?" What Franca really wanted to ask was whether the dream potions, represented by the Sleepless drink, contained real Beyonder characteristics that had been "grafted" over.
Ludwig answered honestly, "I don't know."
"If you get kicked out of the dream, remember to confirm this point," Lumian reminded Ludwig.
The authenticity of potions was related to some of their subsequent strategies.
Ludwig reluctantly agreed.
Lumian thought for two seconds and asked again, "If I don't force you, compel you to stay in this dream, would you want to leave now, and would you be willing to enter again if you were kicked out of the dream?"
Ludwig hesitated for a moment and said, "I-I quite like it here."
Your attitude wasn't like this before, especially after knowing you still have to study, do homework, and take exams constantly in the dream... Franca grumbled inwardly.
"What do you like about this place?" Lumian asked with interest.
Ludwig pondered seriously and said, "The food tastes good, and some of it is real. I can also watch cartoons, and all of you have become a bit nicer to me..."
As if we were terribly abusing you before... Franca didn't say this out loud.
After Ludwig entered the second bedroom and lay down on the bed, Lumian turned his head towards Franca and chuckled. "Still not asleep at this time?"
"Can't I be nervous? Tomorrow is the interview, the first real interview in my life, and I can't fail!" Franca paced back and forth anxiously, muttering, "Normal makeup won't do, but looking too ugly won't work either. How do I strike the right balance... When to use Charm during the interview, shallow Charm or full Charm, then have Anthony find a chance to Hypnotize the interviewers to make them forget about it... Thinking about all this keeps me awake..."
Lumian chuckled in response. "It's not a big deal if you fail; you can find other opportunities.
"Besides, if you're already thinking about having Anthony Hypnotize the interviewers to make them forget about being Charmed, why not have Anthony directly induce the interviewers to choose you?"

"Wouldn't that make me seem useless?" Franca mumbled quietly.
After Lumian's consolation, thinking about how her companions would back her up, she finally calmed some of her anxiety and nervousness. She clenched her fist and cheered herself on, "It's just a try, no big deal!
"It doesn't matter if I fail, failure is the mother of success!"
Seeing Franca's behavior, Lumian suddenly recalled his younger self.
He stood up, walked in front of Franca, and gave her a hug.
"Hey..." Franca was startled.
Lumian said with a smile, his voice slightly low, "Aurore used to often tell me, just go for it, whether you succeed or fail, I'll give you a hug..."
Franca's expression changed, she opened her mouth, then closed it.
After two seconds, she smiled and said, "Shouldn't I, as the older sister—no, older brother, be saying these words to you?"
She broke away from Lumian's embrace and chuckled.
"Next time, when you're nervous, I'll say this to you too, and I'll give you a hug."
"A Hunter's nervousness won't show." Lumian shrugged.
"Tch!" Franca made a disdainful sound and entered the master bedroom.
Rest well to face the interview!
...
The next morning, on the tenth floor of the Tech Building, outside the "White Maple" conference room.
Franca found that nearly twenty people had come for the interview, each a stylishly dressed, attractive female urbanite.
Of course, with a Demoness's beauty, even at just Sequence 7 level, she was much more beautiful than these women. But today, Franca wore slightly old-fashioned black-framed glasses, hiding her bright eyes, and had let down her ponytail to fall naturally, appearing less carefree.
She also used the Lie earring, combined with makeup techniques, to modify some details of her features, making herself look like a conservative, average-level beauty.
"Next, Luo Fu."
Hearing her name, Franca straightened her fitted white women's shirt and loose-legged gray trousers, and walked into the White Maple conference room.
Inside the conference room were three interviewers, one man and two women, with an impressively beautiful woman sitting to the side.

That woman wore azure-colored contact lenses, her slightly curled long hair dyed chestnut brown. Her features had a somewhat exotic feel. She appeared to be only eighteen or nineteen years old, her face showing a hint of youthfulness, like a freshman or sophomore college student, yet she had an air of long-standing authority.

Princess Bernadette, Emperor Roselle's eldest daughter? No, now she's Miss Huang Beibei... *Why has she come to observe Intis Group's interview?* What does she want to do... What does she dislike, what does she like... As thoughts raced through her mind, Franca decided to abandon her plan to naturally Charm the interviewers later.

She answered the interviewers' questions normally according to her background setting, without standing out in any way or revealing her true personality.

After all candidates had been interviewed, the male interviewer looked towards Huang Beibei and asked flatteringly, "Young Miss, do you have any preferred candidates?"

"Just call me Miss Huang," Huang Beibei said in an even tone. "Some of those interviewees were too showy, some dressed too revealingly, some put all their energy into makeup and dressing up. How can they work like that?"

But Mr. Huang likes that... The male interviewer didn't dare say this out loud.

Huang Beibei continued, "I choose the most conservative one, Luo Fu."

"Got it." The interviewer didn't dare oppose Miss Huang.

Even if Mr. Huang himself were here, he would say, "Right, right, right, my daughter has such good judgment!"

Chapter 938: Salary

At noon, Zhang Qing, the deputy director of the administrative department who had overseen the earlier interview, walked out of the Tech Building, heading to a nearby mall to meet a friend.

Inside a gray sedan parked by the roadside, Franca turned her body slightly and nodded seriously at Anthony, her expression stern.

Anthony immediately got out of the car, mingled with the crowd, and hurriedly approached Zhang Qing from the side.

Bump! He "accidentally" bumped into the man in his thirties, causing Zhang Qing's phone to fall to the ground.

"Sorry, sorry," Anthony apologized repeatedly, bending down to pick up the phone. He wiped it on his clothes a few times before handing it back to Zhang Qing.

Zhang Qing, with a dark expression, angrily scolded Anthony, "Are you blind? How can you walk like that?"

"Sorry, really sorry," Anthony responded sincerely, with an attitude full of remorse.

Zhang Qing stared into Anthony's eyes, which had been adjusted to a deep brown color using the Lie earring, as if trying to determine whether the apology was genuine or just a perfunctory excuse.

After a few seconds, he took back his phone and suddenly felt a moment of confusion.

Zhang Qing shook his head and carefully inspected his phone, finding no significant damage.

"Forget it, just watch your step next time!" The deputy director of the administrative department of Intis Group's headquarters, showing some class, waved his phone dismissively, no longer pursuing the matter.

"Really, I'm sorry. How about I buy you an iced coffee to make up for it?" Anthony suggested, pointing to a coffee shop in the corner of the Tech Building's first floor.

Zhang Qing's expression softened. "No need. I'm in a hurry.

"You look around my age; be more careful in the future," Zhang Qing added before heading towards the mall at the intersection, braving the scorching sun.

Anthony noticed that there was a long line at the coffee shop, so he quickly ran into the convenience store next to the Tech Building's main entrance and bought a canned coffee.

Holding the coffee, he jogged to catch up with Zhang Qing. "I'm really sorry about earlier. This is to show my apology."

He handed over the coffee.

Zhang Qing glanced at Anthony with some suspicion, met his eyes for a couple of seconds, then took the canned coffee and said,

"You're pretty considerate."
Zhang Qing didn't intend to drink the beverage from a stranger, but he felt it was acceptable to accept the apology.
Just as he took the coffee, Zhang Qing had another brief moment of confusion. Then, he felt that Anthony's apology was incredibly sincere, and with his proactive actions, combined with the fact that they seemed to be around the same age, Zhang Qing suddenly felt a sense of closeness.
Seeing this, Anthony felt a bit of relief.
This was his second attempt at Hypnosis, and it finally succeeded.
The first attempt was when he returned Zhang Qing's phone, but unfortunately, it failed.
After becoming a Sequence 6 Hypnotist, Anthony's Psychological Cue" or Hypnosis, no longer required the assistance of candles, extract, or other mediums. He only needed the target's attention to be genuinely focused on something, especially his own eyes, to open the door to their Body of Heart and Mind. If the process involved actions of giving and receiving, the effect would be even better, and the success rate would be higher.
Later, when Anthony advanced to Sequence 5, his application of Hypnosis improved even further.
But now, he was suppressed to Sequence 7 in the dream, so while he could still perform Hypnosis without the help of candles, extract, or pocket watches, the success rate was much lower. It was rare for him to fail when hypnotizing an ordinary person, so he had to urgently make up for it.
"I just finished an interview and was in a hurry to get to the next one, so I was rushing," Anthony explained further.
"Just finished an interview?" Zhang Qing, who had been influenced, smiled and said, "I just finished one too, but I was the interviewer."
"Are you with Intis Group?" Anthony pretended to be curious.
Seventy percent of the office workers coming out of the Tech Building were likely from Intis Group.
"Yes, with the headquarters. We were hiring for an administrative position." Zhang Qing, for some reason, felt unusually relaxed and ended up saying what was on his mind, "We've chosen someone, but I don't know if Mr. Huang will reject it later. Although hiring for an administrative role doesn't require a report to him, the HR Director can decide, but he likes to visit the administrative department..."
At this point, Zhang Qing suddenly shut his mouth, realizing he shouldn't be gossiping about Mr. Huang in front of an outsider.
"Your boss, Mr. Huang? He's well-known nationwide," Anthony

said, pretending to suddenly realize.
Zhang Qing smiled.
"Yes, well, the person we hired this time doesn't quite fit Mr. Huang's aesthetic. Uh, mainly in style, though her figure is up to standard. But since Miss Huang personally selected her, it's a done deal.
"Actually, this is a good thing. Half of the employees in the administrative department spend their days focused on makeup and gossip, waiting for Mr. Huang to drop by. Sometimes, I feel like a head eunuch—no, the assistant to a head eunuch—managing the emperor's harem, like something out of Empresses in the Palace. But now, with a capable person joining, my stress will be much less. Otherwise, I'd consider that slacker Luo Shan a model worker..."
Talking about these things, Zhang Qing was full of complaints.
Anthony played along perfectly, letting Zhang Qing vent a bunch of frustrations, making him feel completely at ease.
After a while, Zhang Qing checked his watch.
"I have to go. I'm in a hurry."
He hesitated whether to add Anthony on WeChat, thinking it was rare to meet someone he could chat with so effortlessly at this stage in life.
In the end, Zhang Qing decided not to, out of a sense of self-importance.
Anthony hesitated as well. Adding Zhang Qing on WeChat could provide significant convenience for Franca and Lumian's operations within Intis Group.
But in the end, Anthony refrained, feeling that it was unwise to tie all their connections to Intis Group, as it might be easier for the Celestial Worthy or His subordinates to catch them all at once.
After parting ways with Zhang Qing and waiting for him to walk away, Anthony turned and walked towards the gray sedan parked by the roadside.
He didn't get in but, as he approached the car, subtly raised his right hand and made an "OK" gesture.
Then, he walked past the gray sedan and headed towards another intersection.
From now on, he would have to stay alone until tomorrow.
This was because he had closely interacted with Zhang Qing and used Beyonder powers on him. And Zhang Qing was someone close to the dream manifestation of Mr. Fool, even if not directly.
Seeing Anthony's gesture, Franca slowly nodded, then calmly drove the gray sedan onto the road.
Once they were far from the Tech Building, she allowed herself a

satisfied smile and, feeling triumphant, said to Lumian in the passenger seat, "The moment I saw Miss Huang in the conference room, I knew we had to scrap all our original plans.
"In a flash, I figured out exactly what to do!
"What do you call that? Quick thinking, the ability to adapt!"
After Franca finished boasting, Lumian chuckled and said, "Maybe that was the real Princess Bernadette, who entered the dream specifically to help you infiltrate Intis Group."
"..." Franca quickly adjusted her mindset and said doubtfully, "Can Princess Bernadette actually enter the dream and control Huang Beibei's dream manifestation? How many times has she been kicked out?"
"The Major Arcana card holders are unsure. They only know that she was kicked out once after commissioning Zhou Mingrui to investigate the quality of Dream Tutoring Classes. Whether she had been kicked out before that or how many times, she hasn't told anyone," Lumian recounted from the data. "What is certain is that the Major Arcana card holders have synchronized our situation with her and believe she's trustworthy and willing to help."
Franca concurred succinctly, "I hope it's true. If Mr. Huang really has an eye for talent and comes to bother me, I can ask her to rein her dad in."
Neither Franca nor Lumian had any faith in Emperor Roselle's or his dream manifestation's restraint when it came to women.
...
Xinhong District, in the rented apartment, afternoon.
Lumian received a phone call.
After finishing the conversation, he turned to Franca with a smile and said, "I got the job!"
"Phew..." Franca exhaled in visible relief.
With this, even if her own job offer ended up being vetoed by Mr. Huang, they could still move forward with their plan to access the dream manifestation of Mr. Fool, Zhou Mingrui, through the Intis Group—though it would be more challenging.
Franca, now curious, asked, "What's the salary?"
"It's 3,500 yuan a month during probation, and once confirmed, it's 4,500. For now, it's just rotating between guarding the front and back entrances of the building, patrolling different floors, and monitoring the surveillance cameras. If I get assigned to a more important post in the security department, the pay will go up significantly," Lumian repeated the details from the call. "Plus, the job comes with two uniforms."
"The Intis Group is quite generous. Given the salary standards in

this city, that's decent for a security job," Franca said, feeling happier now that their team would have a stable source of income.
Before she could start worrying about her own offer, her phone rang.
After listening for a few moments, Franca's smile slowly blossomed. She raised her free hand and gave Lumian a thumbs-up, signaling success.
Her offer had come through too!
"Yes, yes. No problem." After a series of confirmations, Franca's smile suddenly froze.
After she hung up, Lumian, who had heard the conversation clearly thanks to his Hunter's hearing, remained silent, waiting for her to speak.
With a wooden expression, Franca said, "The probation is also one month, with a salary of 6,000, and once confirmed, it's 7,000, plus an allowance for clothing. The Intis Group is indeed generous.
"But..."
She paused, her lips moving slightly, her expression turning a bit dazed, before continuing, "But there's a dress code: summer attire requires a blouse, skirt, stockings, and heels..."
"Can you opt out of that?" Lumian asked, keeping his laughter in check.
"No." Franca shook her head. "This must be one of Mr. Huang's rules."
After a moment of silence, she quietly asked, "*Can I not go?* Maybe Jenna can apply instead."
"Do you think she'd get the job?" Lumian countered.
Franca thought for a few seconds and said, "No."
Immediately, she gnashed her teeth. "I can't let Mr. Huang harass her!"
...
Dechuang Garden, Building 5, 23rd floor, Room 3.
Jenna stood by the window, contemplating whether to sneak into Luo Shan's room tonight for a more thorough search.
She hesitated for a while before deciding to wait. Luo Shan's current state was odd, still retaining her role as the neighborhood's guardian. Jenna worried that her actions might provoke Luo Shan, shattering that balance and causing her to lose her protective instincts entirely.
Even though Luo Shan was merely a dream image, Jenna couldn't bring herself to destroy the last traces of goodness within her.
That dedication to protection had touched her.
Maybe she can still be saved? Maybe, as long as she doesn't advance further and endure more severe pollution, she can retain

her sense of self? Hmm, having a boon from an evil god doesn't necessarily mean turning bad, just like Lumian... Jenna mused as these thoughts crossed her mind.

Chapter 939: Virus

Jenna left the window and sat back on the couch, temporarily pushing thoughts of Luo Shan out of her mind.

If the interview went well today, Lumian or Franca would move in with her, and their group would proceed with subsequent actions in pairs—Ludwig was temporarily an accessory.

Sometimes Jenna hoped it would be Lumian, other times she prayed it would be Franca. During their time in the dream city, she wanted to spend more time with Franca, to encourage her, treat her better, and show how much she valued her, making her feel needed, not alone.

Though Jenna hadn't explicitly discussed this with Lumian, she felt they shared an unspoken understanding, as some of their daily behaviors were very similar.

As her thoughts wandered, Jenna suddenly chuckled at herself.

Actually, the best option would be for Lumian and Franca to live here together.

That way, Franca wouldn't lack the feeling of being needed, Lumian could do more, and Jenna would inevitably find herself wondering what Lumian and Franca were talking about, how they were interacting, whether they had grown closer, or if their relationship had evolved.

This made her feel a little bitter, a bit uncomfortable, but it also helped her further digest her Affliction potion.

When it came to causing others pain, Jenna's potion digestion was progressing rapidly thanks to Ludwig's presence; it wouldn't be long before she completed it. But when it came to her own pain, she still had a long way to go.

She murmured softly, "Imagination and suspicion are more painful than reality, and they eat at the soul even more."

This was a principle she had developed for her role-playing, more refined than "causing others pain" or "causing herself pain." If she were an evil Demoness, she could use this principle to subtly manipulate someone, appearing normal on the surface while fostering jealousy in their wife or girlfriend, gradually driving them both into a pit of pain.

Of course, she also hoped that Lumian and Franca's relationship would improve, that they could save each other to some extent.

She was all for it, as long as she wasn't left out.

Jenna gradually reined in her thoughts, unlocked her phone, and opened her photo gallery.

She looked at the sketch of a self-portrait Luo Shan had sent her yesterday, zoomed in on it, and selected the "Delete" button.

She felt that keeping a Painter's artwork on her phone was risky.
She hadn't deleted it yesterday because she wanted to see if anything would happen, but nothing did. However, she couldn't stay on alert about the picture on her phone forever; she still needed her phone to contact Lumian, Franca, and Anthony!
After deleting the photo, Jenna idly scrolled through her phone, flipping through news stories, novels, funny videos, and shopping tips.
Time passed quickly. Jenna straightened her back slightly and stretched without moving her hands.
She felt it might be a good time to message Franca and check on their situation. But before that, she cautiously checked her phone for any strange apps or statuses.
Suddenly, Jenna froze.
She found Luo Shan's sketch still sitting quietly in its original spot in the gallery, lifelike, with a smile on its lips and eyes full of spirit!
For a moment, Jenna felt uncertain.
Did I really delete it earlier?
Was I influenced and hallucinating?
Jenna quickly calmed herself down and deleted the photo again.
She spent the next few minutes staring at the gallery, watching to see if Luo Shan's sketch would reappear.
After a while, the phone screen naturally dimmed, and Jenna quickly reached out to reactivate it.
The photo with Luo Shan's sketch was back in its original spot.
Jenna confirmed there was a problem but didn't know how to solve it. She didn't even dare to use her phone to search for a solution online.
At that moment, she heard the doorbell ring.
Startled, Jenna quietly stepped behind the door and looked out through the peephole.
She saw Lumian and Franca.
With a sigh of relief, Jenna opened the door.
During this process, she remained somewhat cautious until Lumian and Franca appeared vividly before her eyes, with no warning from her spiritual intuition.
"Perfect timing," Jenna said in a hushed voice.
Franca immediately showed concern, slipping the key card into her loose pants pocket as she walked into the room and asked in a serious tone, "What's going on?"
The elevator in the Dechuang Garden required a card to access, and the landlord had provided two cards. Jenna kept one, and Franca had the other.

Once Lumian closed the door and set up the Bottle of Fiction, Jenna carefully recounted everything about Luo Shan.
She concluded, "I remember the Purifiers telling me that one of their colleagues once encountered a painter undergoing mental treatment. The painter always claimed to Spirit Body walk at night, entering a space similar to but distinct from the spirit world, where they fought monsters and enemies trying to invade reality from that space, protecting the peace of their neighborhood. "This is very similar to what I saw with my Astral Projection when I was asleep."
"You mean Luo Shan's protective actions might just be another aspect of her corruption by the boon?" Franca understood what Jenna was getting at.
Jenna tersely acknowledged. "That was my initial guess. But after talking to Luo Shan and hearing her describe those monsters to my Astral Projection, I think she genuinely holds a belief in protection. This likely stems from Mr. Fool's subconscious perception and expectations of her."
"So you think Luo Shan's protective behavior is not only a requirement of the boon but also a reflection of her humanity and will, a result of Mr. Fool's subconscious clashing with the Fantasy Association's evil god's influence?" Lumian's gaze flickered as he made the connection with his own experience.
Jenna nodded. "What I'm worried about now is that if our investigation agitates Luo Shan, it might push her into complete corruption, plunging her into the abyss. And that could also signify a small defeat for Mr. Fool in this particular matter. The loss is minor, but if enough minor losses accumulate, it could irreversibly tip the scales."
Lumian agreed, "Our priority now is to delete that photo."
"Right. If it stays on your phone, it's like a ticking time bomb," Franca said as she took Jenna's phone and focused on trying to delete the sketch, but it stubbornly reappeared.
Franca frowned. "Do we really need to use one of those nuclear-option antivirus programs?"
Lumian glanced at the gallery on the phone, reached out, and tried to enter the screen to see if he could find Luo Shan's sketch in the world behind the screen and destroy it in both physical and mystical senses.
At that moment, Franca stopped him.
"Hold on. Even if you can enter the phone's internal world, that would be like facing Luo Shan's sketch head-on. It would likely alert Luo Shan, agitate her, and confirm our suspicions."
Franca then smiled. "Didn't you add that Stiano on WeChat? Since

he's a dream manifestation of a high-ranking member of the Church of Steam, and his WeChat nickname has 'Information Technology' in it, and he's studying at a university, maybe he knows how to delete a mystically infected photo."
"I'll ask." Lumian nodded thoughtfully.
He dismissed the Bottle of Fiction and had Jenna send Luo Shan's sketch to his WeChat.
Then, Lumian messaged Stiano:
"Can you help? My phone has a weird virus."
Within seconds, Stiano, whose nickname was "Electric Power Energy and Information Technology," replied: "Send me a screenshot."
"He responded quickly. Does that mean he's interested in this kind of thing?" Franca muttered.
Lumian opened the photo, had Franca take a screenshot, and sent it to Stiano.
"This photo won't delete; it keeps reappearing."
A moment later, "Electric Power and Information Technology" sent back a compressed file.
"There's a small program inside. Use it to load the image and delete it, and you should be fine."
Is there really a way to solve this? Franca and Jenna both wondered as Lumian followed the instructions, extracting the file and launching a program called "Information Shredder."
He used the program to load Luo Shan's sketch, pressed the built-in "Delete" button, and then exited the program, locked his phone for a couple of seconds, and reopened it.
He saw that the photo was gone from the gallery, not reappearing.
After testing it several times, Lumian sent the compressed file to Jenna.
Jenna also successfully deleted Luo Shan's sketch, without it returning to her gallery.
"He's really an expert..." Franca said, gazing at Lumian's WeChat contact, "Electric Power and Information Technology," with genuine admiration.
Lumian used voice input to thank Stiano.
"Electric Power and Information Technology" replied: "This virus is worth studying. If you encounter similar problems again, feel free to contact me."
Only with similar problems? Lumian mused as he sent a nodding emoji in response.
Finally, Jenna relaxed.
Suddenly, Franca hissed, "In modern society, or rather, in the dream city, some Sequences and Beyonder powers have become

even more terrifying and harder to guard against...
"As we've seen, if a Painter's artwork has mystical powers, then the corresponding photo can carry some of that too. And if it spreads online, seen and downloaded by thousands, how horrifying would that be...
"Even the surveillance world we encountered before isn't something we'd face in reality."
Before Lumian and Jenna could respond, Franca had another idea.
"Computer viruses and phone viruses are still viruses. Can they be controlled by a Demoness?
"Probably not... But a higher Sequence of the Mystery Pryer pathway should definitely be able to."

Chapter 940: Repaying the Loan

Lumian and Jenna could deeply relate to Franca's concerns.

They had encountered a Pixie in reality before, a higher Sequence Beyonder of the Painter pathway, but they had never imagined that something as simple as a photo sent through the information network could carry such terrifying supernatural power.

"Yes." Jenna nodded. "We need to think more about what different pathways of Beyonders can achieve in the dream city that they couldn't in reality and prepare accordingly."

Though the dream city suppressed all Beyonder powers to the level of Sequence 7, its unique characteristics and the details of its social functioning had brought about possibilities that exceeded their previous expectations.

Of course, Lumian and the others had already begun to discuss how certain Beyonder powers from the Demoness and Hunter pathways could interact with the dream city in unexpected ways. However, they had yet to thoroughly explore the potential changes other pathways might undergo as a result.

Their current conclusions were:

The Hunter and Demoness pathways, which symbolized calamity, could exploit the unique features of the dream city positively, like using the abundance of mirrors to set up Mirror Mazes and cast different mirror spells at any time and place, or utilizing screens as a medium to access previously unreachable or nonexistent surveillance worlds and other dimensional spaces.

On the negative side, there were many more uses, which, as Franca put it, involved actions that would violate criminal laws, and not just any violations, but those that would warrant severe penalties. Examples included using the Internet to seduce others and spread pleasure, amplifying the destructive power of a Pyromaniac by triggering natural gas explosions, or leveraging the dense buildings and population to better and faster spread diseases, among others.

There were countless other more detailed and everyday uses as well.

After discussing this for a while, Lumian said to Jenna, "For now, Franca will stay here for a while. She can observe Luo Shan during the day and approach her as a colleague."

Jenna had already had a hunch, and she looked at Franca with a delighted expression, asking, "Have you joined the Intis Group?"

Franca smiled nonchalantly. "Of course."

She then recounted how she had prepared for the interview and how she had adjusted her plan upon seeing Miss Huang also

participating.
"When do you both start officially?" Jenna asked with concern.
Franca replied with a hint of pride, "I have three days to sort out my affairs. Lumian has to report tomorrow."
The identity that Madam Justice had created for Franca was that of a 25-year-old white-collar worker with three years of experience, someone who had changed fields right after graduation and no longer worked in her original profession.
Franca had been worried that the work experience on her resume might be an issue since it was fabricated. However, when she pretended to be a background checker from a certain company and made a phone call, she was surprised to find that there really was someone named "Luo Fu" who matched her profile closely.
This led her to suspect that the company might be secretly connected to Madam Justice or other Major Arcana card holders in the dream city. Alternatively, before Madam Justice was expelled, she might have used her ability to weave the dream and pre-embedded some identities that could be utilized. After identifying the bearer of the five lucky coins, she might have painstakingly and time-consumingly altered the names, appearances, and other information.
"Anything you need to prepare?" Jenna asked, intending to find out if she could help in any way.
Franca's expression suddenly fell. "I need to buy a skirt, stockings, and high heels..."
It had been a long time since she had consumed the Witch potion, and the most she had worn was a skirt-pants combination. She had never actually worn a skirt, let alone the other items!
"It's part of the dress code," Lumian explained on her behalf.
Jenna understood Franca's reluctance and, with a flicker of her eyes, said, "Have you forgotten the acting method? Forgotten the roles you've played before?
"This is just another form of acting. It's not about digesting the potion this time but about getting close to Mr. Fool's dream manifestation and secretly dealing with the lurking subordinates of the Celestial Worthy and the evil gods' followers, thwarting their schemes.
"Remember, you're just acting."
Franca had already made up her mind, and now she was just finding more reasons to justify it. So, Jenna's Instigation easily worked, and Franca's expression softened.
Jenna looked at her and smiled slightly. "I'll wear the same kind of outfit as you. If we're all dressed the same, there won't be any awkwardness or shame."

Franca's eyes lit up. "Sure!"
Since she had decided to make this sacrifice, getting some perks was a welcome bonus!
Lumian stayed silent, letting Franca and Jenna continue their conversation, wary of being roped into making a similar promise.
He checked the time on his phone and reminded the two Demonesses, "Even though we didn't confront Luo Shan's sketch directly, the fact that we managed to delete that kind of photo itself is suspicious. If Luo Shan notices it's gone, she'll likely test us again or even take more drastic action. You two need to stay vigilant."
"Mm, I was thinking the same thing just now," Franca and Jenna responded almost in unison.
Lumian waved them off and left.
Once he was gone, Franca plopped down on the couch, relaxing as she smiled at Jenna.
"Let's go shopping for clothes tomorrow. We have money now; the lottery winnings are in!"
Jenna visibly breathed a sigh of relief at this news.
She cautiously suggested, "Should we pay off those micro loans first?"
She had seen many people in Quartier du Jardin Botanique and Le Marché du Quartier du Gentleman who borrowed from loan sharks, only to eventually destroy themselves and their families, dragging down the ones they loved most. So, even after entering the dream city, she was always extremely cautious when it came to taking out micro loans.
"I was hoping to save up some money to rent those good items from Star Dream Provisions Store..." Franca hesitated for two seconds before saying, "Fine, let's pay off the loans first. This might even increase the credit limit, which could come in handy at critical moments when we need to go all in."
Before transmigrating, she had seen many cases of people borrowing micro loans and having their lives ruined as a result.
Now, as a fairly experienced Beyonder, she knew that money could be used to rent the magic mirror Arrodes, and she understood that in the dream city, money was likely a symbol representing valuable resources. The "offense-defense battle" that occurred during the prize redemption process further solidified this theory.
From this perspective, carrying outstanding micro loans indeed seemed risky. While it could serve as an emergency solution in the short term, dragging it out over a long period or relying on them to sustain daily life was not a wise choice.
Jenna also sat down on the couch and urged Franca to repay the

online loan on the spot. She then transferred some money to her teammates to help them repay their loans as well.
"Only 120,000 left..." Franca sighed.
Jenna changed the subject, and the two of them chatted about their recent experiences, sharing their thoughts on daily life.
In the end, Jenna couldn't help but ask again, "How exactly can we awaken Mr. Fool?"
They had discussed this question many times before, but still had no concrete ideas. They could only observe and make contact, hoping to find clues and inspiration.
Franca shook her head and sighed.
"I don't know. The Major Arcana have tried everything they could think of, from directly reminding him of the existence of Beyonder powers to filming a movie that fully depicted his experiences in the hope of triggering his memory. None of it worked, and they were quickly expelled from the dream as a result..."
She hadn't known before, but now she understood that the movie they shot was The Great Pirate 3.
"It seems like no one has tried directly telling Zhou Mingrui the truth..." Jenna recalled.
"We're not sure if that would work, but it would certainly lead to being expelled from the dream quickly," Franca replied with a self-deprecating smile. "Still, if we have enough attempts left, we could isolate someone and let them give it a shot."
Late at night, the two Demonesses washed up and went to bed, each occupying a pillow.
They had already discussed how to deal with any probes Luo Shan might carry out next. Now, without saying much, they exchanged a glance and tacitly pulled up their blankets, closing their eyes in the cool air brought by the air conditioner.
Using ice to cool the room would be too easily detected by any potential watchers as an indication of Beyonder powers.
...
Once again, Jenna's Astral Projection ventured out and saw many spirits wandering around, along with the blurry, illusory buildings, the frozen storm, and the semi-transparent barrier.
She didn't immediately check on Luo Shan's situation. Instead, she kept her eyes unfocused and her gaze blank, floating and moving back and forth naturally under the guidance of her spirituality.
During this process, she saw Franca, who was also in a similar state.
Finally, Jenna's body turned toward the semi-transparent barrier adjacent to the deep darkness.
There was no one there.

Luo Shan wasn't there fighting off the monsters trying to invade!
Jenna's heart tightened, but she maintained her previous state, continuing to wander in her Astral Projection.
After a while, her gaze naturally rose, and she saw Luo Shan.
Luo Shan, dressed in a pale yellow skirt-pants combination, was floating high up, quietly watching her and Franca with deep eyes. It was impossible to tell how long she had been watching.
Jenna's nerves instantly tightened, but thanks to her acting skills, she showed no signs of abnormality. Franca remained just as natural.
After a long, intense stare, Luo Shan flew toward the area where strange creatures were attempting to invade. From behind the semi-transparent barrier, she blocked their attacks and drove them back repeatedly.
Neither Franca nor Jenna let their guard down. Like background characters, they dutifully repeated simple actions and irregular movements.
Suddenly, both felt a sense of danger and woke up instantly from their sleep.
They smelled a sickening, foul odor and saw a pair of brown-yellow eyes staring at them from the night clinging to the ceiling.
In the darkness, a pair of wings covered in brown feathers, like those of a giant owl, spread out.

Chapter 941: Recognition

It was a human being seemingly embedded within an owl. His eyes were perfectly round, with pupils that gleamed in brown and yellow, filled with undisguised malice.

Anyone who made eye contact with those eyes would inevitably experience a jumbled mind, tense emotions, and a soul-deep fear.

The half-owl, half-human abomination flapped its wings and, with a foul stench, swooped down toward Jenna and Franca, who were lying in bed.

Its mouth opened, releasing nearly tangible sound waves.

The sound waves struck the two Demonesses, passed through them, and hit the bedsheets, dispersing in all directions.

The bed was now empty. The air conditioner panel's screen, the glass top of the bedside table, and the dark glass embedded in the wardrobe doors all flickered with a dim, eerie light.

Behind the half-owl, half-human abomination, Franca's figure sprang up, clutching an almost invisible Wintry Blade and stabbing at the target with the speed of a gust of wind.

The transparent triangular spike pierced the abomination's body with precision, freezing it in an instant as if it had encountered an icy spell.

At the bedroom door, Jenna's figure appeared, holding a mirror that reflected the enemy's now stuttering movements.

With her other hand, she ignited a silent black flame and quickly ran it across the surface of the mirror.

The half-owl, half-human abomination ignited with an evil black flame from the inside out, but due to the Wintry Blade's effects, it couldn't even let out a wail or scream.

Soon, the abomination burned to ashes, leaving nothing behind.

"A type of spirit creature..." Franca understood that a Demoness's black flame mainly targeted spirituality and life, making it difficult to ignite a physical entity.

She gently descended from midair, as weightless as a feather.

Jenna quickly and quietly said, "That was a Morna, the creature from Luo Shan's painting, and the invader Luo Shan has been fighting."

"Luo Shan's aggressive probe?" Franca responded without hesitation. "We need to go to Luo Shan's room now and try to subdue her as soon as possible, or we might be kicked out of the dream."

Jenna had clearly considered this as well. She nodded and said, "You head to Luo Shan's room. I'll go to that spirit-world-like space. If necessary, I'll take Luo Shan's place and guard the barrier to

prevent those invaders from getting through."
She thought Luo Shan might not be in her room and could still be at the semi-transparent barrier. She was also worried that without Luo Shan's protection, the invaders might break through the defense line and cause a disaster.
Franca didn't waste time and, with a slight nod, slipped to the other side of the curtains, opened the master bedroom window, and jumped down to the 15th floor.
She didn't use the Ice Amulet to cross through the mirror world, fearing that Luo Shan, who had sensed Jenna's previous probe, might have set some traps afterward.
Franca's body was as light as a feather, yet the wind didn't push her off course. She landed precisely on Luo Shan's bedroom windowsill and pried open the window with a thin layer of frost.
Franca didn't rush in. Using the faint pre-dawn light, she quickly scanned the room.
The bed was empty, and paintings of various subjects hung everywhere.
Hiding? Franca pulled out a mirror from the Traveler's Bag.
She intended to divine the level of danger and create an illusion of herself using the mirrors inside and outside the room to see if she could lure Luo Shan into making a move.
In the spirit-world-like space shrouded by the frozen storm, Jenna's Astral Projection emerged and immediately looked toward the nearby semi-transparent barrier adjacent to the deep darkness.
Luo Shan wasn't there.
Mornas and other bizarre creatures were attacking the barrier, gradually thinning it and causing the frozen storm to show signs of disintegration.
Jenna looked around, scanning up and down, but still didn't spot Luo Shan.
She sighed inwardly and floated to the area under heavy assault by the monsters. Dangerous black flames and crystalline ice spears formed around her, shooting outward and smashing many of the invaders.
After holding the line for fifteen minutes, the monsters retreated into the depths of the darkness, their attack fully repelled.
After a while, sunlight began to filter into the area, and both the frozen storm and the wandering spirits and illusory buildings faded away.
Jenna's Astral Projection also returned to her body.
Morning had arrived.
Franca had already returned, her expression serious as she told

Jenna, "I couldn't find Luo Shan. She either hid early or left."
"Could she have hidden inside one of the paintings?" Jenna quickly suggested a possibility.
Franca gently shook her head in response. "I checked all the paintings. None of them had any human shadows, but the sketch portrait you mentioned is missing.
"There's a painting of a bridge that stretches from the edge of a cliff near the foreground over a bottomless dark abyss to another cliff in the distance, where there's a black forest.
"I suspect Luo Shan entered the painting and escaped into the black forest via the bridge. I couldn't pursue her, and I have a strong sense of danger about that painting. It probably wasn't painted by Luo Shan herself."
Jenna was about to say something when she suddenly realized. "We haven't been kicked out of the dream!"
"Nor have we been restricted," Franca noted, having kept an eye on this matter.
She mused, "Luo Shan was corrupted by that evil god from the Fantasy Association, not controlled by the Celestial Worthy. While that evil god might assist the Celestial Worthy in some matters, it certainly has His own agenda and won't help with everything.
"Perhaps He wants us to stay in the dream to hinder the Celestial Worthy at a critical moment, so it's concealing this matter?"
"This is what Lumian meant when he said that the goals of the evil gods and the Celestial Worthy sometimes align, but sometimes they don't," Jenna agreed with a nod. She then added, "It's also possible that Luo Shan hasn't been completely corrupted and hasn't fully fallen, choosing to deal with us on her own without informing that evil god."
"Struggling and resisting..." Franca sighed before saying, "Let's wait a bit longer and see what happens."
After waiting for more than an hour, the two Demonesses saw Luo Shan leave Building 5, dressed in the standard Intis Group administrative department uniform, heading off to work as usual. It seemed as if everything that happened last night had been just a dream.
Franca and Jenna still hadn't been kicked out of the dream, nor had they faced any restrictions.
"She must have hidden in that painting with the bridge," Franca concluded, withdrawing her gaze. "I'll send a message to Lumian, letting him know what happened last night and that we might be at risk of being kicked out of the dream soon."
"Won't that get him kicked out too?" Jenna worried that contacting Lumian now might leave a hidden danger.

Franca let out a soft laugh. "Isn't there that little app Stiano gave us? The 'Information Shredder.'
"I figure WeChat messages are also information, so they should be shreddable without leaving a trace. I'll shred the message when sending it, and Lumian will shred it when receiving it.
"Although I can't be sure the Information Shredder will definitely fool the Celestial Worthy's subconscious tracking, I think it's worth a try. If it really works as we hope, we'll have more room to maneuver in certain situations."
Jenna pondered for a moment and then said, "Okay."
Franca immediately composed a WeChat message, detailing Luo Shan's probe, her and Jenna's response, and the subsequent developments, finally reminding Lumian to use the Information Shredder to delete the chat record.
...
At the entrance of the Tech Building.
Lumian stood in the lobby, casually reading the message from Franca.
Then he made his way to the first-floor restroom, entered the men's section, and found a stall where he activated a Bottle of Fiction.
He then brought his phone close to his mouth and whispered, "You can try more probes. Franca should also start work as early as possible and get in touch with Zhou Mingrui.
"We can't rely entirely on Luo Shan's struggle or the selfishness of that evil god from the Fantasy Association. They could change their minds in half a day or a day, so you need to gather more information before that happens to prepare for the second or third time we enter the dream."
After sending the message, Lumian waited a few seconds before pulling up the Information Shredder app and selecting the chat history with Franca and Jenna, then clicked delete.
Once he finished, he terminated the Bottle of Fiction and took the elevator to the 13th floor, where the Intis Group's security department was located.
After completing the necessary paperwork, he was led into the security department chief's office.
The office was large, almost the size of a private gym, with space for practicing boxing.
The security department chief was a foreigner with black hair and blue eyes, of medium height, and a muscular build that seemed understated but exuded power.
His name was Grimm. According to the Major Arcana card holders, he had been one of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse who

served Emperor Roselle faithfully. He died early, before he could witness Roselle's great achievements, and this was his dream manifestation.
"Have you practiced martial arts?" Grimm asked in broken local dialect.
"Yes." Lumian nodded sincerely.
"Then let's have a sparring match," Grimm pointed to the boxing ring on the other side of the office.
Still not in his security uniform, Lumian didn't refuse. He entered the ring and waited for Grimm to approach.
Grimm took off his light suit jacket, rolled up his sleeves, and stood in front of Lumian.
Suddenly, he threw a punch, the wind whistling as it cut through the air.
Lumian, appearing nonchalant, seemed to have anticipated the move. He sidestepped, avoiding the punch.
Snapping his waist back, he swiftly closed in on Grimm, unleashing a barrage of attacks with his elbows, fists, knees, and toes in a relentless onslaught.
Grimm maintained a tight guard, blocking Lumian's fast but underpowered strikes without allowing them to break his defense or land on his body.
Bang! Bang! Bang! After a few dozen seconds of furious assault, Lumian suddenly stepped back, panting heavily as he raised his hand in surrender.
"I'm out of strength."
Of course, he couldn't knock out his department head on his first day at work. It wasn't just a matter of workplace etiquette—he was concerned that revealing his combat prowess would expose him as a Beyonder.
"Not bad." Grimm nodded.
He walked straight to his desk.
As he passed Lumian, he suddenly lowered his voice as if not wanting the others waiting in the office to overhear and said, "Give my regards to the Mother."
Mother... Lumian's pupils dilated.
Grimm then added in a hushed tone, "I've recognized you, Honorable Child of God."

Chapter 942: Storm in a Teacup

Child of God... Has he sensed the Omebella bloodline in me? This dream of a great existence is truly remarkable, even capturing the smallest details... Lumian had now realized the truth, and he gently nodded in response to Grimm's greeting.

He turned and took a few steps, then said to Grimm, "Director, I'll be heading out first."

Grimm's full title was "Director of Security for the Intis Group."

Grimm's face broke into a satisfied smile as he gave a barely perceptible nod.

"I'm quite pleased with your fighting skills. You should now follow Team Lead Xu to familiarize yourself with the different positions and procedures in the security department."

This was his way of subtly indicating to Xu Xinyang, the current team lead of Security Team 2 who was also in the office, that he valued this young man and did not want Xu to give him a hard time.

"Yes, Director." Lumian responded with a slightly excited tone.

As he followed Xu Xinyang out of the office, his expression gradually settled, and thoughts about Grimm flashed through his mind.

As one of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse who served Emperor Roselle, Grimm had died on a primitive island in the Fog Sea, but later seemed to have been corrupted by the power of the Great Mother, and his corpse had been revived in a strange state...

The Omebella bloodline in me can only be sensed by those directly created by the Great Mother or obtained Her boon, and they would have to be ones that lack the necessary intelligence to mistake me as a Child of God...

The Grimm in the dream city is constructed based on Mr. Fool's subconscious perception, so the Great Mother's corruption hidden within him is understandable, but why did he mistake me for a Child of God? Is it because, as a dream manifestation, he fundamentally lacks the necessary intelligence?

I wonder if the Great Mother has truly, covertly corrupted the dream Grimm and is using this connection to have him help with her own matters...

Lumian found the situation somewhat amusing.

He truly was like a detonator for calamity, having triggered some issues that the Major Arcana card holders had been unable to uncover, and he had only been here for a few days.

After changing into the navy-blue security uniform, Lumian was assigned by Security Team 2's Team Lead Xu Xinyang to guard the

main entrance, with the primary duty of maintaining order in the lobby, preventing suspicious individuals from entering the building, and stopping delivery personnel from taking the elevator, instead directing them to leave packages in the drop-off area.
Lumian and two colleagues replaced the previous security guards responsible for these tasks, standing at the entrance with their backs ramrod straight.
At this time, it was still before the official start of the workday, and employees from various companies were still arriving.
Some of them had a surprised reaction.
The new security guard is quite good-looking...
Is he new?
With that appearance, he shouldn't be a security guard, he should go do live streaming, auditions, or be an extra in movies!
Soon, a male employee from an MCN company on the 7th floor and a female employee from an Intis Group subsidiary company consecutively walked up the stairs and headed toward the entrance.
The latter's eyes suddenly lit up.
The security guard at the door is so handsome...
She picked up her phone, intending to take a photo and share it with her best friends.
The former, on the other hand, immediately became excited.
A handsome security guard, not at all sleazy... Handsome... Security guard... That's great material! It might even become a hot topic and miraculously attract eyeballs!
While a level of handsomeness that would only be considered average or slightly above average for regular people, when contrasted with identities in the lower strata of society, such as security guards, beggars, farmers, herdsmen, delivery workers, or construction laborers, it had the potential to generate a lot of attention online.
The MCN company employee quickly grabbed their phone, intending to record a video.
Sensing their actions, Lumian stepped forward, blocking their phones with his hand, and said sternly, "Please don't take photos of me without permission. Please respect others' privacy!"
The man and woman were both taken aback, not expecting to be stopped.
The male employee blurted out, "I think you have the potential to go viral, and I want to post a video online."
"No need." Lumian stopped them, not wanting to become an Internet celebrity.
The MCN company employee was dumbfounded.

Who doesn't want to go viral these days?
Lumian said seriously, "Did you happen to take any photos just now? If so, please delete them."
Hearing his words, Lumian felt the surrounding office workers all looking towards them, and the man and woman's faces flushed red, feeling a bit indignant.
"What right do you have to tell me to show you my phone? If you've got the guts, call the cops!" the woman retorted angrily.
The male MCN company employee suddenly had an idea and began shouting, "The security guard is beating me up! The security guard is trying to take my phone!"
I'll make you go viral in another way!
Lumian seemed amused by their actions, a smile appearing on his face.
This smile immediately calmed the man and woman, making them feel guilty for having yelled at someone so pleasant.
Maintaining his Charm, Lumian said sincerely, "I appreciate that you want me to go viral, but I really don't need that. Could you please delete the photos or video?"
The man and woman, forgetting about the people around them, dazedly showed Lumian their phones and deleted the photo and video in front of him.
"Thank you." Lumian kept smiling.
The man and woman reluctantly left for the elevators, glancing back at him every few steps.
Once they entered their own company and gradually regained their composure, one felt the security guard was handsome and cool, as well as polite, while the other suspected they might have awakened some remarkable inclination.
At the lobby entrance, many white-collar workers were looking towards Lumian due to the recent incident.
Lumian spotted Zhou Mingrui, who had changed into a dark polo shirt and was carrying a black briefcase.
Zhou Mingrui also seemed to recognize him, with a hint of surprise on his expression.
Lumian gave him a slight smile and gestured towards his security uniform.
Zhou Mingrui composed his expression and politely nodded.
Beneath his calm exterior, his heart was racing with shock and suspicion.
Why is it him, that young man who had an early romance and became a father at a young age?
How did he end up as a security guard at my company?
I only saw him a couple of days ago, and now he's a security

guard... Isn't that too coincidental?
Is it because of the incident with the vending machine?
After becoming an Assassin, I feel like there's been someone secretly observing me...
Is this person trying to investigate my anomaly?
Zhou Mingrui maintained his usual expression as he stepped into the elevator, waiting for it.
He began to feel like he should resign and move away from his current residence, completely escaping the hidden observers...
The reason he hadn't done so before was that his acquisition of Beyonder powers had not been discovered, and the Intis Group's salary was quite plush, at the top tier in Yangdu. If he resigned, it would be very difficult to find a similar good job.
I'll observe for a little longer. If there really is a problem, I'll have to resign and move. If that doesn't work, I'll go look for jobs in Beijing or Shanghai...
Will it implicate my family and friends...
Thinking of this, Zhou Mingrui shuddered, not daring to imagine the worst-case scenario.
He could hide, but his family and friends couldn't.
And without any evidence, even calling the police might not do any good.
Reaching the 10th floor, Zhou Mingrui, still carrying his black briefcase, did not immediately head to the tech department, but instead turned towards the administrative department across the hall.
He wanted to find Luo Shan, the administrative staff member he was most familiar with, and ask about the new security guard.
Luo Shan was not at her desk, seeming to have gone to the restroom. After greeting a few other administrative staff, Zhou Mingrui made an excuse and stood by Luo Shan's desk, waiting for her.
His gaze swept over her desk, finding some familiar items but also a sense of unfamiliarity.
In addition to the cute decorations she had before, there were now strange paintings adorning the divider, the surface of her water cup, and the outer layer of her snack bags.
Next to the computer screen was an empty bottle of a beverage that seemed to have been kept as a decorative item due to its attractive design.
Zhou Mingrui's gaze landed on that beverage bottle, looking past the colorful and diverse abstract packaging to the two words that stood out: Painter.
Painter... Zhou Mingrui's eyes narrowed slightly.

"What are you looking at?" Luo Shan's voice suddenly came from behind him.
As an Assassin, he had failed to sense her approach in advance.
Zhou Mingrui quickly put on a smile and turned to face Luo Shan, acting casual.
"I have something to discuss with you.
"I saw a new security guard downstairs just now, and he was arguing with two people, saying they were taking photos of him without permission..."
Zhou Mingrui recounted the situation he had observed, without adding any speculation.
Finally, he asked, "Is he one of our company's security guards?"
"Yes, he just started today." Luo Shan had a look of sudden realization. "I heard from Feifei in HR that they hired a really handsome security guard, and I was thinking of finding an excuse to go check out the security department."
Lowering her voice, Luo Shan continued, "I'll tell you a secret, but don't tell anyone else—that security guard is only 22 years old and already has a child..."
I know that; he looks younger than his actual age... Zhou Mingrui murmured inwardly.
Luo Shan continued, "Guess how old the child is? 7 years old!"
"7 years old?" Zhou Mingrui doubted if he had heard correctly.
"7 years old, a junior high school student with a child. Tsk tsk." Luo Shan clucked her tongue.
Having a child at 15; so he did 'that' at 14... He's right on the edge of being illegal and criminal... I don't know how old the mother is...
Zhou Mingrui suddenly felt the new security guard might not be after him.
If he had some scheme, why would he expose such an earth-shattering and attention-grabbing background?
How would he be able to carry out his covert operations?
That doesn't fit the logic of trying to be discreet!
Luo Shan rambled on, finally saying, "But he has a very ordinary, average name—Li Ming."
Li Ming... Why not Li Hua... Zhou Mingrui muttered as he left Luo Shan's desk and headed towards the exit of the administrative department.
He didn't look back, because he felt Luo Shan might also have some issues.
She might have already become a Painter.
Zhou Mingrui remembered Luo Shan previously bringing a bunch of beverages for everyone to draw, and at that time, he had drawn Instigator and fed it to the mushrooms, while Luo Shan had drunk

Reporter.
Back then, he hadn't detected anything unusual about Luo Shan or the other colleagues who had drunk similar beverages in the office.
Now, the Painter beverage and the paintings that had appeared on Luo Shan's desk were making him suspicious.

Chapter 943: A New Fabrication

At 4:30 pm, Lumian gathered his personal belongings, changed out of the security uniform, and prepared to leave work.

This job surprisingly had an 8-hour shift system, but he would have to take turns on night shifts later.

It had to be said that Mr. Huang Tao was not too strict in his treatment of employees, and was quite generous with the pay, even if some departments did require frequent overtime, for which Mr. Huang still provided overtime pay, and at a fairly high standard. If the overtime was too late, there were also reimbursements for late-night snacks and transportation.

So, although Mr. Huang was notorious for his womanizing, and some of the company's policies were not very friendly or respectful towards certain female employees, there were still many who were eager to join the Intis Group.

Today, Lumian had been stationed at the main entrance, not assigned to patrol the floors or monitor the security cameras. He had only encountered Zhou Mingrui once in the morning, and had not seen him since.

He was not disappointed about this, nor was he impatient—the pace was just right.

He walked towards the bus stop, braving the scorching sun, and along the way, he took out his phone to send a voice message to Franca: "I think I've left a rather strong impression on Zhou Mingrui today. Although I didn't notice any obvious changes in his expression, if I were in his shoes, I would certainly suspect that it's not a coincidence that I just happened to meet him at Dream Tutoring Classes and then immediately started working at the Intis Group—that I must be tracking him, with some hidden, sinister purpose.

"Given Zhou Mingrui's caution and prudence, he will most likely think this way.

"Since he has formed such a deep impression, I won't be going back to Xinhong District tonight. I'll find a cheap motel to stay at, and see if there are any developments at night, whether it might lead to me being kicked out of the dream."

"Ludwig is being taken care of by Anthony."

Soon, True Hidden Blade replied: "Doesn't this risk Zhou Mingrui resigning? That's bound to be a contingency plan for such a cautious person.

"I haven't even started the job yet! I've already bought several sets of clothes, and spent quite a bit of money!"

Sensing Franca's concern about the money potentially going to

waste, Lumian chuckled and replied: "It shouldn't lead to that for now. I deliberately didn't go and tamper with my background information or try to forge a fake identity before the interview, so that my personal life would be outrageous enough to not seem like I'm coming to investigate.
"Sometimes, a moderate degree of high-profile behavior can actually reduce others' suspicions of you.
"And even if Zhou Mingrui does end up resigning, you can still join the company normally. There's no rule that says Intis Group employees can't investigate Zhou Mingrui's movements after work. Plus, the Intis Group has a lot of issues hidden, like Luo Shan, and Grimm. If we can uncover them, it might give us some inspiration to find a way to awaken Mr. Fool."
He had informed Franca and the others about the problem with Grimm earlier that day.
Finally, Lumian added: "Remember to use the Information Shredder to delete the chat log."
He reached the bus stop and carried out the operation to eliminate any traces.
Soon, the bus arrived. Since it was not the usual rush hour, there weren't many passengers.
Lumian relaxed a bit.
When he had taken the subway earlier, there had been an incident where a man had tried to grope him in the crowded environment, nearly having his wrist twisted off by Lumian.
He wasn't afraid of such things, he just found it annoying and a waste of his time and energy.
If he was experiencing this as a male, what would happen if he switched to his Demoness state?
...
Dechuang Garden.
Franca played Lumian's voice message so that Jenna could hear it.
As Jenna was using the Information Shredder to delete the chat log, she was either folding the new clothes one by one or hanging them directly in the closet.
They had gone to the garment wholesale market again that morning, but this time they chose higher quality and more expensive items, spending nearly two thousand.
After washing, "baking dry", and ironing, the clothes were now ready to wear.
"I've already applied to start work tomorrow," Franca said contemplatively as she helped fold the clothes.
In her previous life, she hadn't even finished university, never getting the chance to experience work. After her transmigration,

she had lived off the original body's savings for a while, then by chance became an Assassin, bidding farewell to a regular job.
Jenna smiled. "Just remember that you're going there to investigate the issues and interact with Mr. Fool's dream manifestations, not because you actually want the job. Then you won't care about how others view your work performance."
"Mm, I wonder when Zhou Mingrui will resign." Franca chuckled. "I hope I can at least get one month's salary!"
After tidying up the clothes, the two Demonesses leaned against pillows on the bed and started scrolling on their phones.
After browsing for a while, Franca clicked her tongue and said, "Mr. Huang really does have a lot of rumors surrounding him..."
Huang Tao himself rarely posted anything on social media, but it was impossible to avoid the many ex-girlfriends he had had, numbering in the hundreds, of all kinds—from famous actresses and singers to wannabe Internet celebrities who wanted to gain attention by sharing their love stories with the big company president, and even some who staged and acted out their own stories, despite having no real connection to Huang Tao.
So no matter what Franca and the others browsed, they would come across stories about Mr. Huang and his women every now and then, reinforcing the impressions they had formed from Roselle's diary and the corresponding legends.
However, Franca still wanted to say that Mr. Huang was truly generous with his money, and would not set traps to reclaim the gifts he had given, or have the women thrown in jail.
It was precisely because Huang Tao's many mistresses were verifiably from the administrative department of the Intis Group that Franca had discovered during her job interview that not many people were applying for the positions for the sake of the job itself.
Of course, she herself was not applying for the job for the sake of the job either, but to get close to Mr. Fool's dream manifestation.
Before Jenna could respond, Franca sighed again. "I can't even imagine what the state of the administrative department at the Intis Group must be, and for Mr. Huang to be able to manage such an administrative department and still have the company thrive, he must be really capable..."
Jenna also shared some of the other rumors she had come across about Mr. Huang, and by 11 o'clock at night, the two Demonesses put down their phones, turned off the lights, and fell asleep.
They once again found themselves in the strange space shrouded by a frozen storm, seeing Luo Shan, now in casual attire, floating at the edge of the semi-transparent barrier, having just pushed back the invasion of the bizarre creatures into the dark depths. Luo

Shan turned and looked at them.
Franca and Jenna's planning had anticipated this scenario, so they did not immediately make a move, but instead returned Luo Shan's gaze.
Their eyes met, and Luo Shan's low voice spoke, "Are you also people with Beyonder powers?
"Are you here to investigate me?"
Her expression was full of wariness.
"Yes, and no." Franca responded in an ambiguous way.
Jenna used a touch of Charm and smiled amiably.
"You haven't left, and you're even willing to meet with us."
Luo Shan was silent for a few seconds before speaking, "Last night, I hid away, and discovered that you had taken my place, guarding the barrier and dealing with those monsters.
"I feel, I feel, that you must be a good person, and perhaps we can talk."
Before Jenna could respond, Luo Shan pressed on, "What do you mean, 'yes, and no'?"
Franca organized her thoughts and said seriously, "We want to approach you, to figure out the issues with you, and eliminate the hidden dangers, but we are not here to deal with you. The real target is not you."
Luo Shan became a bit confused.
Franca further explained, "We are from the future, using a time machine to return to the present, in order to find that Messiah."
"Messiah?" Luo Shan was bewildered.
What the hell are you talking about?
Franca nodded solemnly.
"In the not-too-distant future, humanity is under attack by evil forces and is on the verge of extinction. That's when a Messiah suddenly appears and rescues us, mitigating the dire situation.
"The evil forces, through some means, have created a time machine and sent some monster-disguised creatures to the present in this city, trying to eliminate the Messiah while they are still weak.
"Fortunately, the future Messiah detected this and found a way for us to also utilize the time machine.
"He exhausted the machine's last bit of power to send us back here, so that we can find and eliminate those monsters, and help the young Messiah overcome the interference and obstacles, truly awakening them.
"Our contact with you is actually to get closer to the young Messiah."
Jenna listened to Franca's narrative and was momentarily

dumbfounded.
Although they had briefly discussed the general storyline beforehand, she never expected Franca to be able to present it so convincingly.
The story seemed to align quite well with the actual situation, yet there was a fundamental difference.
Luo Shan's expression fluctuated for a while, finding Franca's story too far-fetched to be true, yet strangely familiar.
As her thoughts raced, she suddenly recalled something and blurted out, "Is that future Messiah Zhou Mingrui?"
Franca was not startled. She had fabricated this story precisely to probe how much Luo Shan knew and what information she had access to.
She didn't expect Luo Shan to readily accept the ridiculous plot, but to accurately guess that the target was Zhou Mingrui.
Knowing she needs to deal with Mr. Fool's dream manifestations, but not understanding why? Jenna pondered and nodded, while Franca countered, "Why do you think so?"
Luo Shan's expression suddenly twisted in anguish.
"That voice, that voice made me give Zhou Mingrui the real Instigator beverage.
"That was the first time it made a clear demand, and promised to reward me with the Painter beverage afterwards.
"I felt having Beyonder powers was great at the time, and thought if Zhou Mingrui could also obtain them, it might not be too bad..."
At this point, Luo Shan's voice suddenly choked up.
"I-I didn't mean to harm him, I really didn't..."
Franca tensed up.
"Did Zhou Mingrui drink the Instigator potion, I mean, beverage?"
The information provided by the Major Arcana card holders did not mention Luo Shan giving Zhou Mingrui the Instigator beverage.
"I don't know." Luo Shan shook her head. "But there was some incident at the neighboring company that day, I'm not sure if it's related to this or not, I'm not sure..."
Seeing Luo Shan's mental state becoming unstable, Jenna changed the subject.
"How many times have you had those beverages?"

Chapter 944: "Shaman"

As Jenna asked the question, she glanced at Franca.
Franca nodded slightly.
Luo Shan recalled her past experiences, her emotions calming a bit. "Thrice."
"When and where was the first time?" Jenna asked in a friendly manner.
Luo Shan cast her gaze towards the slightly ethereal buildings around them, seeing the glass windows representing each household glimmering in the faint light from the frozen storm.
"It was in the lobby of the apartment complex. A vending machine suddenly appeared there, filled with beautifully designed beverages. I got a random one, and it turned out to be..."
Seeing Luo Shan suddenly pause, Franca, floating in front of a building, took a step forward with an eager expression, wanting to probe further.
Several Spirit Bodies of the apartment residents were wandering beside her, some wearing glasses, some with beautiful watches, some with shiny accessories on their clothes.
Jenna grabbed Franca's arm, giving her a look to not be hasty, and asked softly herself, "What did you get?"
"Shaman," Luo Shan named the beverage.
"Shaman... What abilities did it give you?" Jenna asked casually.
Luo Shan's mood lifted a bit.
"It allows me to choose an area and, by setting up totems and performing rituals, establish it as my domain. Then I can communicate with the sky, earth, water, trees, and creatures there, borrowing power from their spirituality to cast various spells."
That sounds so powerful... It's more impressive than any Sequence 9 I know of, almost on par with some Sequence 7 pathways... Jenna thought in amazement.
She curiously asked, "Can a Shaman only fight within their fixed domain? Can't they change territories?"
"They can change, but it requires a complex process and takes a long time, about three days," Luo Shan explained enthusiastically. "Outside their domain, a Shaman's power rapidly weakens, becoming weaker the further they are from their territory."
There are still significant limitations... Is the personal domain a manifestation of spatial authority? Jenna further inquired, "You guard the barrier to prevent those monsters from invading because they would destroy your domain?"
"That's part of it," Luo Shan sighed. "Another aspect is that a

Shaman's power allows me to sense different spaces, higher worlds, letting my spirit make initial contact with them. This causes my soul to be noticed by the monsters, becoming a target for their invasion.
"This place you're in now is a unique space formed by the fusion of my spiritual world, the Shaman's domain concept, and the corresponding spirit world of Dechuang Garden. Those monsters want to use it as a stepping stone to invade reality, while also attacking my spirit and mind. If the barrier is breached, my soul will be controlled or even replaced by them."
A Sequence 9 has such high risks? No wonder Shaman sounds so powerful... Xinhong District doesn't have this issue while Dechuang Garden does because a Shaman lives here... Does Shaman essentially act as a beacon for those monsters to invade reality? Jenna roughly understood the basic situation of the Shaman sequence.
Luo Shan added with a self-deprecating smile, "I'm no longer just a Shaman. Now, even if this barrier is breached, it won't affect me much.
"The only problem is that everyone living in Dechuang Garden would be killed in their dreams, their abdomens torn open, their internal organs ripped out..."
As she spoke, Luo Shan fell silent.
After several seconds, she whispered, "This is my doing. I have to take responsibility..."
"If this wasn't a problem you brought about, and you encountered this situation, would you choose to guard the barrier in place of the Beyonder who fled?" Jenna deliberately used this question to reinforce Luo Shan's sense of guardianship.
Luo Shan's lips moved slightly. "I don't know... Maybe... Probably..."
Jenna didn't press Luo Shan for a definite answer, instead asking with concern, "You have to guard the barrier every night and still work during the day. Isn't it too exhausting?"
"No, you can think of this as my mind world or my dreamscape. Being busy here doesn't affect my physical rest. I just need to take a nap during the day," Luo Shan smiled.
This state made her feel like the protagonist of a novel or comic, saving humanity in an inner world at night while continuing to be a corporate drone during the day.
Jenna exchanged another glance with Franca before asking, "What was the name of the second beverage you drank? Was it also from the vending machine?"
"The second one I drank was Reporter," Luo Shan recalled. "Once, after being injured while guarding the barrier, I woke up feeling

like I had a bad cold, coughing severely. I took a day off and went to Mushu Hospital. The doctor prescribed cough syrup, but the pharmacy gave me the Reporter beverage instead. I suddenly felt it must be the follow-up beverage to Shaman, so I didn't tell the pharmacist they'd given me the wrong medicine...
"Later I drank Reporter again, but that one was fake. Among that batch of drinks, only the Instigator for Zhou Mingrui was real... I shouldn't have listened to that voice..."
Mentioning this incident, Luo Shan's expression twisted, seeming very regretful.
Jenna didn't immediately inquire about the origin of that voice, instead discussing less sensitive matters. "What are the abilities of Reporter?"
"Observing, investigating, and uncovering the truth of the world, along with extreme speed," Luo Shan's mood became low again, speaking vaguely without giving specific examples.
She slowly raised both hands to cover her ears, mumbling as if in a trance, "After drinking the Reporter beverage, I sometimes felt I had changed. I began to hate this world, hate the details that didn't match my imagination, hate the people and things I was dissatisfied with. I wanted them all to explode, wanted to remake them, make everything here conform to my fantasies.
"And to remake these things, I had to pray for help from the truth of the world, from the true world above...
"Then, I heard that voice..."
Jenna pursed her lips, changing the subject once again. "After Reporter is Painter, what comes after Painter?"
"After Painter should be Literature Enthusiast, someone skilled in imagination. I haven't gotten that one yet..." Luo Shan briefly answered Jenna's question, then moved her hands up to pull at her hair. "That voice made me malicious, fierce, cruel..."
As she spoke, Luo Shan suddenly burst out, crying as if her heart was being torn apart, "I don't want to be like this! I'm not this kind of person!"
Crystalline tears were already streaming down her cheeks.
Seeing this, Jenna floated closer and said in a gentle voice, "I know you're not that kind of person.
"That kind of person wouldn't continue to guard the barrier, preventing monsters from invading Dechuang Garden and killing the adults and children here..."
"No, many of these monsters were drawn by me. Originally, they weren't so powerful..." Luo Shan was still in painful self-reproach.
She tugged at the collar of her shirt, seeming unable to breathe.
Jenna moved in front of her and continued, "Everyone makes

mistakes. The difference between good people and bad people is that good people know how to make amends..."
Suddenly, Luo Shan raised her head.
The top two buttons of her shirt were undone, clearly revealing the painting on her neck and chest.
The painting looked like a tattoo, a vibrant, colorful flower.
The flower suddenly enlarged, opening its petals in a spectral form, revealing dense teeth and hidden pus inside.
The invisible scent it had been emitting, combined with the manifestation of its true form, made Jenna freeze, too dizzy to control her body.
The colossal flower suddenly enveloped Jenna's body.
Seeing this, Luo Shan's face showed a cold smile, silently mouthing, "That fool is just right for making people like you let your guard down..."
Just then, there was a cracking sound, like a mirror shattering.
Luo Shan's expression changed slightly. She was about to attack Franca and find out where the real Jenna was, when her body suddenly stiffened, as if frozen.
Stuttering, her Astral Projection quickly faded, leaving this space.
In reality, in room 1502.
Franca stood by Luo Shan's bed, thrusting the Wintry Blade into the sleeping Luo Shan's shoulder.
She had already actively left that spirit world-like space earlier, when Luo Shan answered that she had drunk the beverage three times.
The version of her before and after that moment was created and manipulated by Jenna using mirror magic, utilizing the surrounding glass windows, eyeglass lenses, and other mirror-like objects!
Upon realizing that Luo Shan's mental state was truly unstable and that she had acted against Zhou Mingrui, Franca and Jenna decided to initiate their contingency plan: one creating illusions to occupy Luo Shan, the other returning to the real world to find Luo Shan's body and fundamentally control her!
This might also eliminate the risk of them being kicked out of the dream.
After stabbing Luo Shan with the Wintry Blade, Franca immediately took out her phone and called Anthony: "Come to Dechuang Garden, Building 5, Room 1502 now. We need you to treat someone with personality alteration due to corruption.
"Remember to bring Ludwig."
Although the current plan was for Jenna, Franca, and Lumian, Anthony to operate in two separate groups with minimal contact,

deleting chat and call records with the Information Shredder at all times, urgent situations called for flexibility. Anthony was the only person they could trust to treat Luo Shan now.
Of course, Franca or Jenna could use repeated Charm to make Luo Shan fall in love with them for a period of time, following their will, and do the same to her altered personality, thus controlling the stability of her mental state. But with other options available, there was no need for such distortion, which might lead to a "the disease is cured, but the patient 'died'" outcome.
After Anthony replied "Understood", Franca sighed in relief and used invisible spider silk to bind Luo Shan, who was struggling to wake up.
Then, she removed her hair tie, letting her long hair cascade down and strangely extend, touching Luo Shan's body.
This brought about a stone-like rigidity at the points of contact.

Chapter 945: New Hostel?

After a while, Jenna also came to Room 1502 by climbing through the window, and saw Luo Shan controlled by three methods.

"Were the invading monsters driven back again?" Franca asked with concern.

Jenna tersely acknowledged.

"By the time dawn breaks, they should attack again."

She then summarized the key points of what Luo Shan had said after Franca left that space.

Hearing that becoming a Shaman would cause one's own psyche to sense another space and higher realms, thereby attracting all sorts of strange creatures to invade, Franca couldn't help but mutter, "What kind of extraterrestrial demons is this..."

Jenna could understand every word Franca said, but did not grasp the specific meaning. However, she was already accustomed to Franca occasionally blurting out some strange words, especially after entering the dream city, so she did not ask further, and continued to relay the information she had gathered from Luo Shan.

As soon as she finished, the doorbell rang.

Jenna walked to the bedroom door, and cautiously, without approaching the main entrance, took out a hand mirror to reflect the view outside the peephole.

It was Anthony and only Ludwig's head visible in the image.

Jenna then opened the door, pointed to the bedroom, and said in a low voice, "The patient is inside."

Anthony had driven himself to Dechuang Garden—after a few days of observation, he had learned how to drive to some extent.

Then, he "persuaded" the patrolling property management to help with parking and card swiping, and pressed the button for the 15th floor.

As Anthony walked towards the bedroom, Ludwig's gaze fell on the paintings Luo Shan had done.

"Can I... eat them?" he licked his lips, looking at Jenna with longing.

Jenna hadn't seen the child in several days, and seeing him still the same, she felt a warm affection and smiled.

"These are just paintings."

"But they still represent a certain reality." When it came to eating, Ludwig was always mature.

Jenna thought for two seconds and replied, "Okay."

She felt that these paintings were done by Luo Shan previously, and Luo Shan's condition at the time was unknown. There might

be some contamination or hints left on the paintings. If Anthony managed to help Luo Shan recover, but the patient then saw some of her old paintings and the problem resurfaced, it would be a waste of her companions' efforts.
With the permission granted, Ludwig cheered and crumpled the unframed paintings, stuffing them into his mouth.
"Will eating these give you different qualities or abilities?" Jenna asked curiously.
Ludwig replied with a muffled voice, "I can temporarily acquire them, but the duration is very short, and I don't have anyone to deal with right now.
"Eating these is mainly to increase my spirituality limit..."
Jenna nodded in understanding, then looked at the back of Ludwig devouring the paintings and asked lightly,
"How have your studies been these past few days?"
Ludwig's back suddenly stiffened for a second.
Inside the bedroom.
Anthony had learned the full situation from Franca, lit some candles, and dripped on some pure dew.
After completing all the preparations, he signaled to Franca that she could retract the Wintry Blade.
Franca, who had been holding the almost invisible triangular spike for too long, had lost a lot of body temperature, and her lips were even a little pale. Upon hearing this, she hurriedly put the weapon back into the Traveler's Bag.
Of course, she was still far from becoming an undead. The negative effects of the Wintry Blade were also suppressed to Sequence 7 in the dream.
As the Wintry Blade was put away, Luo Shan's eyeballs rolled slightly under her eyelids and slowly opened.
She quickly recalled her ordeal, her expression twisting into an extremely hideous grimace.
Then she saw a pair of deep brown eyes, like a deep lake, and the flickering yellowish candlelight reflected in them.
At the same time, she smelled a soothing aroma.
Luo Shan immediately became calm.
Seeing this, Franca clicked to enlarge the words she had previously written on a memo and showed them to Anthony.
"Do not try to guide or suppress the corruption hidden in the patient's Beyonder powers. Trying to completely eradicate them is unrealistic and very dangerous for us now.
"What you need to do is treat the patient's mental problems, resolve the personality alteration, or reduce the impact of the personality alteration.

"If the patient relapses later, we will still handle it according to the current plan, until we find a way to thoroughly solve the corruption problem or find help."
Anthony gave an almost imperceptible nod and began to communicate with Luo Shan's mental self.
Franca stood by, ready to intervene if anything went wrong with Anthony.
After Ludwig finished eating even the paintings in the bedroom, leaving only the one with the bridge, precipice, abyss, and dark forest, Anthony finally completed the treatment, extinguished the candles, and led Ludwig out of the bedroom, leaving Room 1502.
After another dozen seconds, Luo Shan's long eyelashes fluttered, and her gaze gradually recovered its normalcy.
She looked at Franca and Jenna, her expression a mix of bewilderment and as if she understood everything, and said, "I feel like I've just woken up from a long nightmare..."
"We found a professional doctor and cured the problems caused by the corruption in the potion beverage you had to some extent. Of course, this is just the end of the first treatment course, and whether there will be more courses will depend on the situation," Franca explained vaguely, retracting her long hair and releasing the invisible spider silk bindings.
"I knew you guys would help me, even if you can't cure me, you'll deal with that demon properly." Luo Shan's spirit and mind had returned to the lively state before she drank the Reporter beverage. She smiled at Franca and said, "Actually, I noticed at the time that you seemed to have become less real, but I suppressed that feeling and deliberately didn't look at you again, so that she wouldn't find out."
She? Luo Shan had already started referring to the altered personality as "she"... Hmm, that altered personality also called her that... The situation seems to be more serious than we had anticipated previously, but at least we managed to control her and provide treatment in time... Franca nodded with relief.
Jenna then asked curiously, "You could tell that eh... Luo Fu became a mirror illusion, relying on the Reporter's ability to observe, investigate, and uncover the true world, right?"
They had not fully understood the Painter pathway beforehand, and their plan almost failed.
"Yes," Luo Shan quickly nodded, looking at Franca, "Your name is Luo Fu? It's so beautiful, even nicer than my name. You're all so beautiful!"
"We all have the surname Luo, maybe we were from the same family five hundred years ago," Franca joked.

Jenna thought for a moment, looking at Luo Shan.
"Why do you go out every evening?"
"Sometimes I go to find tasty food to treat myself, sometimes I go shopping with friends, and sometimes..." At this point, Luo Shan's expression changed slightly, "Sometimes I go to a hostel that's still under renovation and hasn't opened yet. That's the latest demand of that voice. It said that after the hotel officially opens, it will bestow the Literature Enthusiast beverage on me."
Hearing that the voice demanded opening a hotel, Franca and Jenna simultaneously thought of a term: Hostel!
For that evil god of the Fantasy Association, the concept of a hostel has strong symbolic meaning? Reflected in the dream, it's wanting to open a hotel? Franca asked, "Is the money for opening the motel from you, or is there another source?"
"I put in part of it, spending all my savings. Fortunately, I had already bought this apartment before, so the remaining money wasn't much. But lately I've been seriously considering mortgaging the house to get a loan and get the hotel open as soon as possible." As she spoke, Luo Shan had a look of lingering fear on her face.
Money... opening a hotel requires money... That evil god of the Fantasy Association didn't directly give money, but made the bestowed offer it themselves... In Mr. Fool's dream city, money indeed has a strong symbolic meaning, and the evil gods have to worry about it... Franca asked thoughtfully, "You only put in part of it, who provided the rest?"
"It's people similar to me, but I haven't met them. Different people go to oversee the hotel renovation every day, not contacting each other, and they're not even on the shareholder list. I'm not on it either. The hotel is owned by someone called Anderson."
"Anderson? Anderson Hood?" Franca and Jenna asked in unison.
"How do you know?" Luo Shan was surprised.
Franca laughed. "We know a lot more than you think."
She asked for the name of the hostel, opened her phone, searched it, and then saw the name "Colorful Hostel" with Anderson Hood's name clearly listed as a shareholder.
This was too direct and conspicuous, making Franca feel that the other party was challenging or boasting about a successful prank.
This needs to be told to Lumian, let him probe Anderson... Speaking of which, he hasn't had an excuse to communicate with Anderson... The Hunter hasn't been sending messages either... Jenna took out her phone, hesitating whether to contact Lumian now.
She was afraid of waking the other party.
After a brief consideration, Jenna still chose to step out of the

bedroom and use the text input method to report the information about the Colorful Hostel to Lumian.
She couldn't let the softness in her heart hinder the communication of key issues. Perhaps it wouldn't be long before dawn, and she and Franca would be kicked out of the dream!
Luo Shan followed and came to the living room.
She looked around and asked, "Where are my paintings?"
"We've taken care of them all," Jenna honestly expressed her previous concerns.
"Okay." Luo Shan nodded in agreement, then pointed to the remaining painting and said, "What about this one? It's the most dangerous!"
Seeing Franca and Jenna both looking at her, Luo Shan's expression changed a bit as she said,
"It's not a painting I did. Soon after I drank the Reporter potion, I suddenly received this painting, I don't know who sent it. I feel that the other me, in my heart, is also in the dark forest in this painting!"
"Conventional methods can't get rid of it." Jenna did not hide anything from Luo Shan.
Franca changed the subject thoughtfully. "What about the self-portrait?"
"When you deleted all the photos, it self-combusted, so I knew you had a problem," Luo Shan said, worried and curious.
Franca immediately became eager to try, pointing to the painting with elements like the dark forest, precipice, and bridge, and asked Luo Shan, "Have you tried taking a photo of this painting? Did anything unusual happen at the time?"
If she could take a photo and the abnormality wouldn't immediately manifest, they could consider using the Information Shredder to handle it!
"I couldn't, the photos would turn out blank. I even tried throwing it away, but it mysteriously came back," Luo Shan shook her head.
As expected... Franca was not too surprised by this. She pondered and said, "Can you give us this painting? We have a way to deal with it, but we'll have to wait until morning."

Chapter 946: Five-Star Rating

After returning to Room 2303 with that painting, Jenna asked Franca, "Should we have Lumian contact Stiano? He should be very interested in how to deal with this kind of painting."

The previous self-portrait sketch of Luo Shan could be photographed but not deleted, while this precipice bridge painting couldn't be photographed at all.

Franca pondered for a few seconds, then smiled and said, "That's one of the backup plans, but not the first choice.

"We currently only know that Stiano is interested in mystical photos that can spread online and can't be deleted. We're not sure if he has the desire to research paintings that can't be uploaded to the Internet. Besides, always owing favors to someone or owing too many may not be a good thing. It will have to be repaid eventually. There's no such thing as a free lunch.

"It's similar to taking out micro loans. Do it appropriately and moderately, and be prepared to repay from the beginning."

With the analogy of micro loans, Jenna immediately accepted Franca's reasoning.

"Then how do we deal with it?" she asked.

Franca's smile widened.

"Wait until dawn, then take this painting to the Star Dream Provisions Store after the morning rush hour."

"Huh?" Jenna couldn't quite follow Franca's train of thought.

Franca, who had read extensively before her transmigration, always had a broad perspective. She chuckled softly.

"When you get to the Star Dream Provisions Store, ask the shopkeeper if She'd buy items with mystical elements, and how much She would offer.

"If She's willing to buy it, this painting probably won't be able to come back on its own."

Can it be done like this? Jenna thought carefully and found it quite feasible.

Based on the premise that only true gods could enter Mr. Fool's dream besides those who possessed medium items or had special connections, as well as details like contacting the Major Arcana card holders by sending letters to the Church of the Evernight Goddess's high-ranking deacons through the Star Dream Provisions Store, and the dim environment of the store itself, Lumian's team could actually guess the shopkeeper's identity in reality, but they tacitly agreed not to mention it.

If the shopkeeper agreed to buy this strange painting, it meant She definitely had a way to control the corresponding anomalies and

truly transfer ownership to Her hands.
Moreover, wasn't it normal for a provisions store focusing on mystical elements to purchase items with mystical elements?
After pondering for a few seconds, Jenna asked, "What if the shopkeeper doesn't want to buy it?"
"Then ask if we can put this painting in Her store for consignment. We'll pay a storage fee and give Her a cut of the final sale. It's equivalent to paying Her to handle the anomaly," Franca said with a smile. "If She still doesn't agree, we'll contact Stiano through Lumian. If Stiano doesn't accept, you can take advantage of the daytime to find an opportunity to throw this painting at the police station. Remember to hide your identity well."
At this point, Franca's expression suddenly turned serious. "My spiritual intuition and mystical experience tell me that your process of dealing with this painting won't be very smooth. There will be dangers. If the danger is too great, you should actively exit the dream. We still have two more chances later, there's no need to risk your life now."
"Understood." Jenna nodded solemnly.
Afterwards, she and Franca entered that strange space again and found Luo Shan once more guarding by the semi-transparent barrier, in quite good condition.
Franca revealed her identity as a colleague and started chatting casually with Luo Shan, learning more details about Zhou Mingrui's situation and which employees in various departments of the Intis Group were worth noting.
The results of the conversation left Franca and Jenna very satisfied, feeling that saving Luo Shan was not only a choice of emotion and stance but also a very correct decision in the course of completing their mission.
The information obtained from Luo Shan might have taken Franca and Lumian one or two months to slowly collect on their own.
"Later on, we'll need your help to convince Zhou Mingrui that he is the future messiah," Franca said to Luo Shan with a flattering smile. "We can't directly tell him the truth; he definitely wouldn't believe it."
"He absolutely wouldn't believe it. No normal person would. They would just think it's a prank or a scam," Luo Shan nodded, then added in a small voice, "I don't fully believe it myself now..."
Franca pretended not to hear Luo Shan's mumbling and changed the subject.
When dawn broke and they automatically left that strange space, Franca got out of bed and took out the clothes she was going to wear today from the wardrobe, with a heavy expression.

Before Jenna could speak, she took the initiative to say,
"There's a good chance you'll encounter danger and anomalies today, so it's better to dress in a way that allows for easier movement."
Jenna nodded lightly, not refusing.
Franca quickly finished washing up, took off her pajamas, and while slowly changing her clothes, she muttered, "After I became a Witch and adapted, sometimes when walking on the street, I would feel pleased and happy with people's gazes, thinking how charming I am. This might be a manifestation of a Demoness's narcissism.
"But there's a difference between enjoying it yourself and being forced by others. And if you're not used to it yourself, you definitely won't like it. It's like when I was in school, they always required us to wear uniforms on Mondays, and there would always be some rebellious kids in each class who didn't want to, preferring to accept punishment instead..."
Franca rambled on, as if trying to distract herself and reduce the sense of embarrassment.
She bent over, clumsily putting on the most conservative flesh-colored stockings, stepped into brand new low-heeled shoes, then stood up and, using the full-length mirror embedded in the wardrobe, adjusted her blouse and light gray skirt that reached just above her knees.
Looking at herself in the mirror, Franca pursed her lips, feeling quite complex.
Jenna watched the whole time without saying a word.
After applying makeup that made her look a bit less attractive, tying up her long hair, putting on glasses, and picking up a high-quality branded replica handbag, Franca walked steadily towards the door.
Just before leaving, she turned back and smiled at Jenna.
"Thank you for not saying 'you look beautiful in this outfit' or 'this really suits you'. However, you seemed a little bit amazed just now. Hmm, that made me feel a bit better."
"Yes," Jenna returned with an affirming smile.
Franca waved and walked out the door.
She really is someone who's good at self-regulating her emotions and staying optimistic... Jenna sighed inwardly, turning her gaze away and patiently waiting for the morning rush hour to pass.
Close to 9 o'clock, she carried the painting and left Building 5, coming to the residential district's lobby.
She chose to take a ride-hailing car to the Star Dream Provisions Store instead of taking the subway and then switching to a bus.

She was afraid that the painting's anomalies might affect more people. If that happened, the latent dangers might not do much to her, but the widespread commotion could bring about more serious problems.
After a while, Jenna walked out of the lobby and came to the roadside, seeing a white sedan already waiting for her.
After opening the car door with one hand, she glanced towards the driver's seat, confirming that the driver wasn't wearing a monocle and had no other obvious features. It was someone she didn't recognize and didn't trigger her spiritual intuition.
Jenna sat in the back, placing the painting on her lap and holding it to her chest.
After verifying the last digits of her phone number, the driver started the vehicle.
Jenna was highly focused, vigilantly guarding against possible accidents.
Suddenly, she felt her breathing become difficult, while there was no anomaly around her.
It was as if another her was being pushed into the sea, and the feeling of drowning was transmitted through a mystical connection.
Without hesitation, Jenna took out a mirror, plucked two strands of hair, trying to stick them to the mirror's surface and burn them with a Demoness's black flames.
She was attempting to cast a black magic related to the Mirror Substitution, actively trying to transfer that mystical connection to the mirror.
At this moment, Jenna had a hallucination. She saw gently swaying emerald-green waves and her own hands flailing uncontrollably, as if struggling to swim to the surface.
However, there was a force pulling at her legs, trying to drag her to the bottom of the sea.
Almost simultaneously, a pale, swollen hand reached out from nowhere and covered her mouth.
"Mmph, mmph, mmph...
"Glug, glug, glug..."
Jenna showed obvious signs of drowning, her nose, respiratory tract, and lungs becoming extremely uncomfortable.
She wanted to use her substitutes but couldn't sense those mirrors. She seemed to be separated from them in different worlds—even the mystical connection cut off.
Suddenly, silent black flames flowed out from Jenna's eyeballs, nostrils, mouth, ears, and other places. These black flames burned her body from the inside out, burning all the invisible things

trying to influence her.
Outside the black flames, frost condensed, encasing Jenna in a thick ball of ice and snow.
On the surface of the sphere, countless invisible spider silk retracted, wrapping layer by layer, forming a huge "cocoon".
Jenna finally no longer felt the agony of nearly drowning, but she still couldn't sense her body or substitutes.
The next second, she found herself walking on a bridge.
On the other side of the bridge was a steep cliff and a dark forest at the far end of the cliff.
Have I entered that painting? Jenna tried to turn around and return to the starting point of the bridge, to escape the world inside the painting from the entrance, but she couldn't control her body and watched helplessly as "she" continued forward along the bridge.
At this time, two people walked out of the dark forest.
One was Luo Shan with a malicious face, and the other was Jenna herself.
A Jenna with a seductive smile!
Crack!
The bridge suddenly broke, and Jenna fell towards the dark abyss whose bottom couldn't be seen.
Great fear and despair invaded Jenna's mind, her consciousness rapidly blurring, unable to save herself.
She seemed to already see the image of herself smashed into bloody pieces.
Taking advantage of her consciousness not yet completely falling into darkness, before the unimaginable pain arrived, she mustered her last clarity, about to actively exit the dream.
But it didn't work.
It didn't work!
Useless... Jenna's gaze suddenly froze.
She didn't give up; she was still trying to save herself, gritting her teeth, struggling to regain control of her body to use the Demoness's feather-fall technique.
At this moment, a ray of sunlight shone into the dark abyss, illuminating the cliff high above.
All the scenes before Jenna's eyes instantly shattered and fragmented in the brilliant sunlight.
She suddenly opened her eyes and found herself still sitting in the car, hugging that painting.
"We've arrived," the driver turned halfway, reminding Jenna.
I arrived so quickly? Jenna felt as if she had been walking for an entire morning in a stuffy environment, her clothes soaked with

sweat.
She looked out the window somewhat bewilderedly and saw the Star Dream Provisions Store.
Jenna instinctively pushed open the door and got out of the car, wanting to rush into that shop to avoid other possible anomalies that might come later.
"Remember to give me a five-star rating!" the driver called out to her retreating figure.
Jenna unconsciously turned her body sideways, looking back at the driver.
The driver had a smile at the corner of his mouth and somehow produced a crystal monocle, putting it on his right eye.

Chapter 947: Equivalent Exchange

Amon? Jenna, standing beside the car, was stunned.

She vaguely understood why she had been able to arrive at the Star Dream Provisions Store early and escape that deadly "hallucination" at the most critical moment.

In this matter, Amon had provided help, otherwise the consequences would have been unimaginable!

She and Franca had already estimated the risks to the greatest extent possible, but they still hadn't anticipated that the real situation would be so terrifying that she wouldn't even have a chance to exit the dream!

This was even with her being a Demoness, with survival abilities and life-saving skills among the top of same-Sequence Beyonders.

Indeed, Amon and His father are on the same side as us in awakening Mr. Fool, just with different desired paces of progress, so He only provided help once until now. Hmm, this help was aimed at that evil god of the Fantasy Association. If I had failed my mission today and died, would the painting have returned to Luo Shan on its own, leading to developments that Amon and His father don't want to see? In an instant, Jenna thought of many things, not even having time to feel fear in hindsight.

"Please help close the car door," Amon, with the monocle clasped in His right eye socket, reminded Jenna with a smile, just like a real ride-hailing driver.

Only then did Jenna return to normal, closing the car door with her free hand.

Watching the white sedan drive smoothly away from the street, Jenna, hugging the precipice painting, rushed into the Star Dream Provisions Store without any regard for her image.

Feeling the light suddenly dim considerably, Jenna immediately relaxed.

Only then did she feel a surge of confusion.

How could Amon accurately accept my order?

How did He know we had obtained this painting and were going to send it to the Star Dream Provisions Store today?

With everyone being suppressed to Sequence 7, it's impossible to be so precise with prophecies and divinations...

Could it be that true gods are a bit more special in the Dream City, subject to different restrictions than us?

So, did Amon "coincidentally" save me with the help of His father?

This could also explain why this painting was so difficult for me to resist, not even giving me a chance to save myself. If we were all at the Sequence 7 level, it shouldn't have been like this. Or perhaps I

actually had a chance to break free from its influence, but being my first encounter with this type of attack, I made mistakes in my response and failed to notice details that could have been utilized?
Jenna looked at the oil painting in her arms, suppressing her thoughts, and walked to the cashier at the very back of the Star Dream Provisions Store.
This could also explain why this painting was so difficult for me to resist, not even giving me a chance to save myself. If we were all at the Sequence 7 level, it shouldn't have been like this. Or perhaps I
actually had a chance to break free from its influence, but being my first encounter with this type of attack, I made mistakes in my response and failed to notice details that could have been utilized?
Jenna looked at the oil painting in her arms, suppressing her thoughts, and walked to the cashier at the very back of the Star Dream Provisions Store.
"Do you buy items with mystical elements?" Jenna politely asked the shopkeeper who was playing with her phone.
The shopkeeper slowly raised her head, and the blazing sunlight outside suddenly appeared to be obscured by clouds.
"Yes, we do," she said with a slight smile at Jenna.
They really buy them? Jenna's heart leapt with joy, and she quickly placed the oil painting on the counter.
"Could you take a look and see if it meets your requirements? How much is it worth?"
The shopkeeper reached out a hand, bringing the painting in front of her, and after looking at it for a few seconds, said, "Thirty thousand."
How much? Jenna instinctively doubted her ears.
It wasn't that she thought this bizarre oil painting had no mystical value or wasn't worth thirty thousand dollars, but rather that for her and Franca, this painting was a burden, a danger, something they would pay to get rid of.
If the shopkeeper had said she would take the painting for thirty thousand, Jenna thought that after discussing with Franca, they would grit their teeth and pay.
As thoughts raced through her mind, Jenna considered a possibility.
The shopkeeper of the Star Dream Provisions Store was clearly an ally, and her current behavior was to provide more funds for their team!
And money had a very important symbolic meaning in the dream city.
Not giving it directly, but using this opportunity of buying mystical items as the method... Is this because certain rules of the dream

city have to be satisfied, rules that even gods can't violate? Equivalent exchange? If that's the case, it must have been quite difficult for the Major Arcana card holders to provide two thousand in startup funds for each person... As Jenna pondered this, she subconsciously thought about whether she should haggle and try to raise the price a bit.
Since they were allies, they should be happy to see such behavior, as it meant they could provide more help.
After brief consideration, Jenna abandoned this idea.
The person across from her was the manifestation or projection of a true god. The price She quoted must have been carefully considered to be the most suitable, appropriate, and least likely to cause anomalies.
In terms of dream consciousness, every item has an estimated price. If the transaction price is too high, it would be considered problematic and might involve illegal activities, inevitably leading to reactive changes later? Thinking of this, Jenna responded to the shopkeeper, "Alright."
When the shopkeeper actually transferred thirty thousand yuan to her, she suddenly regretted letting Ludwig eat all the other paintings.
Those might have been worth some money too!
However, those were just painted by Luo Shan, probably not worth much, maybe just equivalent to Ludwig's late-night snack fee...
"Thank you," Jenna thanked the shopkeeper again and turned to walk out of the Star Dream Provisions Store.
The bright and brilliant sunlight from high above fell on her, finally giving her the feeling that the danger had completely passed.
Only then did she begin to feel fear in hindsight.
She still had many things she wanted to do, and several people she couldn't bear to part with.
...
At the entrance of the Tech Building.
Franca, wearing low-heeled shoes, carefully ascended the steps.
Her current attire was something she had never worn before, instinctively giving her a sense of insecurity and embarrassment.
This also made her more sensitive to the gazes and appraisals around her. She felt that the admiring ones were still acceptable, but those she previously considered impolite and a bit disgusting seemed to have increased, or perhaps she just noticed them more.
Some people hurried past her, then turned back to look after taking a few steps, thinking they were being discreet, revealing slightly disappointed expressions.

This seemed to be because her makeup, attire, and appearance didn't quite match what they had imagined after seeing her figure and clothes.
Why are you being disappointed, asshole!? Franca secretly gave the middle finger and cursed under her breath.
She finished climbing the stairs and looked towards the security guard at the entrance, but didn't see Lumian.
I thought we could communicate with eye contact at the entrance, pretending not to know each other on the surface, just like in some spy dramas... Franca muttered silently, entering the lobby and walking towards the elevator area.
Inside the surveillance room.
Lumian sat in front of several large screens divided into multiple scenes, carefully scrutinizing each image from a not-so-short distance—yesterday's minor incident had given the security director Grimm an excuse to arrange for him to watch the surveillance cameras and patrol floors on rotation, no longer needing him to guard the main entrance.
Lumian quickly noticed Franca in the elevator area.
Although she had deliberately made herself less attractive, wearing old-fashioned black-framed glasses and clothes she had never worn before, he still recognized her.
It's a pity that Lie now only equates to top-level makeup skills and can't adjust height and figure to a certain extent, otherwise the disguise effect would be better. As it is now, it's still too eye-catching... Lumian commented inwardly.
Seeing him watching so intently, the security guard sitting next to him rolled his eyes and said, clutching his stomach, "Li, my stomach hurts. I'm going to take a dump. Keep an eye on things yourself."
Is this what they call getting paid to poop online? Lumian chuckled inwardly and said, "Okay."
This couldn't be better, maybe there's even a chance to check yesterday's surveillance footage and see how Zhou Mingrui reacted to my employment in private, what he did!
After his colleague had really gone to the bathroom outside the surveillance room, Lumian saw that Franca had finally managed to squeeze into an elevator after two failed attempts.
Suddenly, on the big screen, several images showing the situation inside the surveillance room went black.
Wh— Lumian didn't move.
Just two or three seconds later, there was an additional person beside him.
It was security director Grimm, wearing a thin blue suit.

Grimm, looking at the big screen, said in an seemingly casual manner, "Be careful of Huang Tao."
Be careful of Huang Tao? What relationship could Mr. Huang have with me, a male security guard? Lumian was puzzled and asked calmly, "Why?"
Maintaining his posture of watching the surveillance footage, Grimm explained briefly, "He has betrayed Mother and is no longer Mother's child."
No longer... He was before, but not now? Madam Magician mentioned that in the Vortex event, although Emperor Roselle perished, he also severely injured the strongest Broker, breaking free from the corruption of the Great Mother and retaining hope for resurrection... This and Amon obtaining Mr. Fool's consent to reborrow power from His past self are different components of the same event... So, Mr. Fool learned about Emperor Roselle's status, his subconscious cognition changed accordingly, causing Huang Tao in the dream city to no longer secretly harbor the corruption of the Great Mother? Lumian preliminarily sorted out the logic.
This also made him realize a problem.
Previously, he only knew that accidents and encounters in the dream might reflect in reality, bringing about real death or problematic advancements, but at this moment, he believed that changes in reality could also affect the dream, provided that Mr. Fool truly perceived it.
The dream and reality are not one-way, they can interact... Lumian remembered this discovery, then turned to smile at Grimm.
"Don't you find it strange that as a Child of God, I'm not female?"
Grimm showed a confused expression.
"Mother's children can be of any gender, or even genderless, or multiple genders.
"These are not important. What's important is the ability to procreate and bring new life.
"Child of God, why do you ask such a question?"
Grimm's brow furrowed slightly.
Of course, it's to test you! Lumian laughed inwardly in response.
He was testing whether Grimm only sensed that he was a Child of God, or if he knew more specifically that the current Child of God was Omebella, like Hand Bro.
If Grimm knew that he "was" Omebella, he would be confused about the gender discrepancy. Otherwise, it would indicate that he indeed lacked the necessary wisdom and was more like an NPC as Franca had said, but influenced by the Great Mother.
This also proved from another angle that there was a big problem

with Hand Bro being able to call out the name Omebella.
Lumian smiled and said to Grimm, "I thought Mother had already let you know my true identity."
As he spoke, his hair gradually lengthened, and the lines of his face quickly softened.

Chapter 948: New Employee Orientation

Grimm's eyes suddenly reflected an indescribably beautiful face, but it vanished in an instant, like an intoxicating yet elusive dream.

Lumian had already transformed back into his male state, his gaze returning to the surveillance screens.

After a few seconds, Grimm remarked with some emotion, "When I was looking at the files transferred from HR, I was thinking that a 22-year-old with a 7-year-old son would be very suitable to be Mother's child, and could definitely be developed. I didn't expect... hehe, truly worthy of being a Child of God."

I didn't alter my background information and it still had this benefit... Who could have imagined this before... Lumian had to admit that some things were beyond even the Conspirer's expectations.

Suddenly, Grimm stood up and left the surveillance room.

In just a few seconds, the cameras inside the surveillance room resumed their normal operation.

Not long after, the security guard who had gone to defecate came back swaying and sat down next to Lumian.

He asked in a low voice, "The team lead didn't come, did he?"

This referred to Xu Xinyang, the team lead of Security Team 2.

"No," Lumian answered honestly.

Simultaneously, he silently added, The team leader indeed didn't come, but the director did.

Just then, Lumian's phone vibrated.

He turned his body, facing away from his colleague, discreetly took out his phone, unlocked the screen, and looked.

The vibration was caused by a WeChat friend request, the applicant was "Intis Group Grimm".

After Lumian accepted, he took the opportunity to look at Grimm's Moments.

The most recent post from this Intis Group security director was: "Children are more important than money, offspring are more important than work."

This was accompanied by nine photos, each with a different child.

Lumian quickly scrolled down and found that Grimm's Moments had only one theme, which was sharing about his children.

As expected of Mother's chosen... Mr. Fool's subconscious cognition is still too conservative, only giving Grimm nine children. Well, it also has to conform to the daily situations of the dream city... Lumian locked the screen, put the phone back in his pants pocket, and thought about how to use Grimm's connection in the future.

He planned to inquire about what Grimm had been doing recently and how well he had been doing it, under the pretext of a superior's assessment next time.
...
Tenth floor, Intis Group Administrative Department, in a separate small office.
Franca, led by an HR employee, met Zhang Qing, the deputy director of the Administrative Department.
He was also one of the interviewers at the time.
Zhang Qing looked Franca over a few times, and actually felt somewhat amazed, of course, this was based on her state during the interview as a reference.
He could only say that her figure was indeed very good and suited this outfit well.
While feeling slightly amazed, Zhang Qing also started to feel a headache coming on.
He worried that this new employee, Luo Fu, might be blindly arrogant and set her sights on Mr. Huang. He hoped she would honestly and diligently do her job and share the work between himself and the others.
Thinking of this, Zhang Qing couldn't help but sigh inwardly.
This was his daily state—facing beautiful women of various styles every day. As a man, it was inevitable to have some emotional and desire fluctuations, but thinking that any of these beauties might become Mr. Huang's mistress at any time, he had to restrain himself and not show any abnormality. Moreover, these beauties would occasionally quarrel and fight, coming to his office crying to complain, requiring him to spend a lot of energy mediating.
This made him physically and mentally exhausted every day, feeling a sense of spiritual impotence.
Namo Amitabha... After Zhang Qing muttered to himself, he began to explain the daily work and precautions of the office to Franca according to the procedure. Finally, he said,
"I'll find an experienced employee to guide you. Your position will be arranged near that experienced employee."
Franca took the initiative to say, "Can you ask Luo Shan to guide me? I live very close to her, we knew each other before, and it was she who made me full of longing for the company."
Before officially starting work, Franca had already thought about what image she wanted to establish in the Intis Group—a newcomer without much scheming, rather frank and cheerful, sometimes speaking without thinking.
She felt that as long as she didn't deliberately think about problems, following her daily life state, she could play this role

well.
Zhang Qing nodded slightly, his expression relaxing considerably.
"Alright."
He stood up, led Franca out of the small office, and introduced her to other employees in the Administrative Department.
Franca saw a series of beautiful women, all striving to highlight their own characteristics. There were innocent ones, glamorous ones, and those going for the pure and sexy look, giving a feeling of a hundred flowers blooming.
These women were all alert at first glance of Franca, but after their gaze fell on her face and scrutinized for a few seconds, they relaxed.
Some of them perfunctorily greeted her, then picked up their makeup mirrors to touch up their makeup, while others enthusiastically chatted with Franca, thinking about dumping some of their work on this newcomer later.
Franca, having managed a large number of dancers before, was not at all unfamiliar with such occasions and naturally and appropriately followed Zhang Qing around the Administrative Department.
Seeing this, Zhang Qing imperceptibly nodded.
Indeed, she has three years of work experience, and the evaluation from her previous job is also very good...
Well, after seeing so many star-like beauties, she shouldn't have any unrealistic thoughts, right?
Franca noticed that about half of the employees in the Administrative Department were working seriously, and among them were also many good-looking women. Some of them were purely attracted by the high salaries of the Intis Group, not very interested in Mr. Huang, and had no hope for possible favor. Rather than becoming Mr. Huang's mistress, they wanted to develop in their careers and prove themselves. Others planned to establish the image of a capable woman, thinking that maybe Mr. Huang liked this type recently?
After introducing Franca to the employees of the Administrative Department, Zhang Qing stopped near Luo Shan's position and nodded slightly.
"Luo Shan has gone to the foreign trade department and will be back later. Since you already know each other, I don't need to introduce you.
"Well, Mr. Ed is currently entertaining distinguished guests and is not in the company. I'll take you to meet him later."
Mr. Ed referred to Edward, the vice president of the Intis Group, in charge of administration and business.

Entertaining distinguished guests? Zaratulstra mentioned in the information from the Major Arcana card holders? This person is most likely a subordinate of the Celestial Worthy, suspected to be a Seer pathway Angel who is currently possessing Loki... Franca pondered as she replied to Zhang Qing.
She then sat down at the desk not far from Luo Shan's position, hiding her legs under the table.
This gave her back a sense of security, and the faint shame subsided.
After Zhang Qing left, Franca sat in her position, looked around the bright and clean Administrative Department, and silently exclaimed, So this is what working is like?
During the time after her transmigration when she lived on the original body's savings, she naturally thought about not eating away at his savings. But she didn't understand the skills the original body knew, and the original body had no education, so she could only find jobs like waitressing and kitchen helper. Then, because she couldn't stand the conscience of those merchants and was unwilling to make counterfeit goods or help deceive innocent people, she couldn't last more than a few days before being fired either voluntarily or involuntarily. Almost no job lasted a full month, and there were a few times when she was almost beaten up.
In her view, this was no different from doing internships or summer jobs during college, and now was her first real job, especially in a dream city very similar to the world she transmigrated from.
While observing naturally, Franca saw those paintings on Luo Shan's desk.
Her heart suddenly skipped a beat.
Luo Shan's paintings at home have been cleaned up, but there are still some here...
After some consideration, Franca stood up, walked to Luo Shan's seat, tore down all the paintings that could be torn down, and threw the ones that couldn't be torn down into the trash can along with the items.
Just as she finished doing this, she felt someone watching her. She quickly turned around and saw a young man standing in the aisle near Luo Shan's position.
The man wore plain glasses and a plaid shirt interwoven with three colors. His appearance was slightly handsome with a very clear chin. It was Zhou Mingrui.
Damn... I've directly encountered Mr. Fool's dream image... Seeing Zhou Mingrui's confused expression, Franca quickly explained,

"Luo Shan asked me to help deal with it."
Zhou Mingrui looked at the paintings and items in the trash can and said as if talking to himself, "Luo Shan asked to throw them away?"
He then glanced at Franca's heel height and muttered in his heart, With such low heels, she's still a bit taller than me...
Franca nodded repeatedly. "Yes."
Zhou Mingrui withdrew his gaze and smiled politely.
"Where did Luo Shan go? I have something to discuss with her."
"She went to the foreign trade department to coordinate something," Franca repeated Zhang Qing's words.
"I see..." Zhou Mingrui then asked, "Are you transferred from another department to the Administrative Department? I don't think I've seen you before."
"I just joined," Franca answered honestly.
Seeing Zhou Mingrui's gaze unconsciously move towards Luo Shan's seat, Franca controlled her inner nervousness and smiled naturally. "Luo Shan and I are neighbors, we knew each other before. Before she went to handle something, she asked me to help her throw away all these paintings. She doesn't want them anymore."
"Doesn't want them anymore..." Zhou Mingrui repeated this sentence softly, then asked Franca with a colleague's attitude, "Did Luo Shan give you an internal recommendation?"
"No," Franca said with a slight pride. "I relied on my own abilities."
Then, she said in a teasing tone, "Maybe the Administrative Department has been busier recently and needs more people who can really get things done."
She didn't want Mr. Fool's dream image to think she was a gold digger.
Zhou Mingrui exchanged a few more pleasantries, left the Administrative Department, and returned to the opposite side.
Franca sat back in her position and quietly let out a sigh of relief.
Fortunately, I've been well-trained in front of the Demoness of Black. Mr. Fool, uh, Zhou Mingrui shouldn't have noticed that I was a bit nervous just now, right?
It's normal to be nervous; after all, being caught throwing away a colleague's belongings behind their back...
...
In the Security Department.
Lumian took the opportunity of going to the bathroom to take out his phone and clicked on the dialog box with Anderson Hood.
The chat interface was still on the initial greeting message.

Chapter 949: Action Outline

Lumian waited until the Dream Tutoring Classes opened before sending a WeChat voice message to Anderson Hood: "Mr. Anderson, does your tutoring school have painting classes? A friend of mine wants to know."

Late last night, after receiving Jenna's message, Lumian had been thinking about how to probe Anderson Hood. Based on the premise that Luo Shan had been controlled and her personality alteration had been initially resolved, he felt this matter was not urgent. There was no need to screenshot the legal representative and shareholder information of "Colorful Hostel" and send it directly to Anderson, "teasing" him about having other businesses on the side, then observe the subsequent reactions and wait for any unexpected developments that might result.

He planned to start with the painting issue, making initial probes, preferably without alerting Anderson.

Anderson didn't immediately reply to Lumian, and Lumian didn't linger in the bathroom. After putting his phone in his pants pocket, he walked back to the surveillance room.

Looking at the large screens in front, his mind flashed through some "experiments" he had done and needed to do:

1. Observe Mr. Fool's dream manifestation Zhou Mingrui and the people around him;
2. First contact with Zhou Mingrui during the day, leaving a certain impression;
3. Contact people close to Zhou Mingrui, divided into multiple stages, eliminating the suspicion of one target before contacting the second, and so on;
4. Contact Zhou Mingrui again during the day, leaving a deeper impression;
5. Establish a relationship with Zhou Mingrui during the day where they can chat, hinting at the existence of Beyonder powers and his goodwill;
6. First contact with Zhou Mingrui at night;
7. Hint at the existence of Beyonder powers and his goodwill to Zhou Mingrui at night;
8. Based on the results of previous experiments and information gathered, formulate an official awakening plan.

This was the action outline for Lumian's team. Currently, the first four parts had been completed, without any members being kicked out of the dream or restricted—the third part was spread throughout all subsequent steps, and team members responsible for contact had to self-isolate for a day and night before

continuing to advance.
The danger gradually increased in the later parts. Lumian didn't think about avoiding it, because determining the degree and source of danger was one of the purposes of the experiment.
Only by knowing what could be done, what couldn't be done, what would lead to immediate expulsion, and what would take time to explode, could their team officially enter the eighth part of the action outline and formulate a targeted awakening plan.
At this stage, Lumian wasn't worried or afraid of failure; he was worried and afraid of not being able to find the reasons for failure.
With this mindset, he approached many things with a "testing" attitude, including whether the Information Shredder worked, whether Stiano was trustworthy, what relationship Anderson Hood had with the Painter pathway, whether Grimm had become one of the Great Mother's tools to influence the dream, and so on.
After obtaining the "test" results, they would contact the Major Arcana card holders to compare accounts, which might reveal some interesting and useful details.
If they had consulted the Major Arcana card holders from the beginning, forming preconceived notions and fixed thinking patterns, they might not have "tested" some things, and thus wouldn't have obtained their own results. Their minds would only have the conclusions given by the Major Arcana card holders, which might cause them to miss key information.
As Lumian was pondering what to do next, he noticed an extra person in one of the surveillance footage on the tenth floor.
The camera was aimed at the entrance of Aurora Company, and a person wearing a black robe with a wide, deep hood, completely out of place among the nearby white-collar workers, walked out.
Suddenly, a bunch of things fell out from inside the person's robe, landing on the floor.
The person quickly crouched down, the hem of the robe covering the fallen objects.
When he stood up, the ground was clean again, without any items.
After watching this person walk out of the surveillance frame and seeing him enter the elevator through the elevator surveillance, Lumian silently said to himself, The corresponding image of a certain Aurora Order mister in the dream city?
The security guard sitting next to him followed his gaze and laughed. "It's fine; those clowns from Aurora Company are like that, it's nothing, it's nothing."
"I thought it was some kind of performance art," Lumian said as he saw Luo Shan walk out of the elevator and enter Intis Group.
...

In the Administrative Department, large office.
Luo Shan stood confused next to her position, seeing her desk with fewer items.
"I helped you throw away all those paintings," Franca walked up to Luo Shan and explained with a smile.
Luo Shan suddenly realized. "I had forgotten about that, I'll draw some new ones later..."
She paused, looked around, and asked in a lowered voice, "Can I, can I still paint later?"
"Yes, it doesn't affect your ability to use your power," Franca comforted her quietly, then raised her volume, "Director Zhang asked you to familiarize me with the work process."
Zhang Qing's full title was Deputy Director of the Administrative Department of Intis Group.
"Alright," Luo Shan pulled Franca over and openly chatted about various rumors within the company.
Finally, Luo Shan said, "I forgot to tell you last night, there's a very fierce young security guard recently, he even dares to confront those MCN company people. He's really handsome, but don't tell anyone, he already has a 7-year-old son, and he's only 22!"
Theoretically speaking, I am the child's mother, one of them... Franca's mouth twitched slightly as she echoed with emotion, "Doesn't that mean he had a child in middle school?"
After chatting about this for a while, Franca returned to her seat and entered work mode according to Luo Shan's guidance.
After familiarizing herself with the office system, she rotated her chair and stood up, wanting to help Luo Shan share some work.
She saw Luo Shan holding a pencil, focused on drawing on a white paper.
What is she drawing? Franca softened her steps and silently walked to Luo Shan's side.
She found that Luo Shan was sketching her own portrait, with the Luo Shan in the drawing having hollow eyes, a cold expression, and a curled mouth.
Wh— Franca's eyes focused, and she immediately reached out her right hand and patted Luo Shan's shoulder. "What are you drawing?"
Luo Shan was startled and quickly stopped drawing.
She turned her body, and seeing it was Franca, she visibly relaxed and pressed her chest saying, "You scared me! I thought Old Zhang had caught me slacking off."
As she spoke, Luo Shan glanced at the sketch on the table, and her expression quickly became terrified. "W-why would I draw this?"
Franca pondered for two seconds and showed a smile that made

Luo Shan extremely reassured. "Don't worry, you can finish the last few strokes, I'll handle it."
Luo Shan, uncertain and frightened, leaned forward again and added the last few strokes, making the portrait more lifelike.
As soon as she finished drawing, the Luo Shan in the sketch presented a state as if about to come alive.
Franca grabbed the drawing, and black flames burned discreetly in her palm.
The expression of Luo Shan in the drawing immediately became painful, full of resentment and hatred, as if she was being burned by flames.
In the blink of an eye, the drawing curled up, showed signs of spontaneous combustion, quickly turned to ashes, and fell into the trash can.
While completing this, Franca used the Mirror Maze through the transparent screen on the side of the desk, Luo Shan's phone screen, and the mirror being used by a nearby colleague for makeup touch-ups, to deal with the camera surveillance, not leaving traces of Beyonder powers in the corresponding footage.
Luo Shan stared blankly as Franca dealt with the portrait, and after a few seconds said, "I feel like my whole being is much lighter again; my mood is better..."
Franca nodded and said, "You can treat it as another release of negative emotions and desires."
She considered for two seconds and added, "Currently, we can only treat your symptoms, not solve the root cause of the problem. Simply put, we can only treat the symptoms, not cure the disease.
"So, you need to be vigilant about your own state, do self-examination from time to time, and if you find something wrong, immediately come to us for a new round of treatment. Don't delay, otherwise, behavior like just now will happen again, and the consequences are unpredictable.
"Power is a double-edged sword, it can harm others and also harm oneself, this will accompany us for life."
Luo Shan listened quietly, remained silent for a moment, then lowered her head and smiled. "I understand what you mean. I hope, hope I can hold on for a few more years, preferably until I retire, no, let me enjoy life for five more years after retirement."
Seeing Luo Shan's smile, Franca suddenly felt it was a bit dazzling, making her eyes ache.
She comforted in a gentle voice, "If you can hold on, you must hold on. It's like some diseases that were terminal in earlier years, but if you actively cooperate with treatment and try to prolong life as much as possible, with the development of technology, they can

now be cured or better controlled.
"In the future, we might become stronger, or we might meet stronger people who have ways to solve the problem of power corruption."
Luo Shan nodded slowly and smiled at Franca. "I'll try hard, and you should work hard too, let's all work hard!"
Franca remained silent for a moment, deactivated the Mirror Maze, and returned to her own seat.
She picked up her phone and found that Jenna, with the nickname "Nana and Lily", had sent her a message describing the dangers encountered on the way to deliver the painting to Star Dream Provisions Store, the help received, and the final result.
Franca felt a wave of fear reading it, quite regretful that she hadn't accompanied Jenna.
She had anticipated great danger but thought that Jenna, who could actively exit the dream, would at most waste one opportunity. She didn't expect that the power representing the Fantasy Association's evil god could prevent them from returning to reality.
Jenna had almost really died.
Fortunately, Amon and His father are on our side... Jenna's experience also provided us with important intelligence. In the future, when encountering people and objects of the Painter pathway, we need to be careful about not being able to exit the dream... Franca, thinking of Lumian about to or already probing Anderson Hood, quickly forwarded Jenna's message to him and reminded him to remember to delete it using the Information Shredder.
After confirming that Lumian was currently fine and had received the warning, Franca glanced sideways at Luo Shan, roughly understanding why her condition had suddenly relapsed earlier.
It coincided with the time when that painting appeared abnormal and Jenna nearly died.
...
Inside the surveillance room.
After deleting the messages from Franca and Jenna using the Information Shredder, Lumian pinged Anthony.
He continued to watch the surveillance, looking for potentially abnormal people and events.
At this time, Xu Xinyang, the leader of Security Team 2, entered the surveillance room and patted the shoulders of his two subordinates. "After work this afternoon, let's go visit Old Wang and Old Ding together, they're out of danger now.
"After visiting the hospital, let's gather with all the folks who aren't

on shifts. It's also to welcome Little Li to our team."
"Old Wang and Old Ding?" Lumian could guess who the team leader was talking about, but still had to put on a confused expression.
Xu Xinyang, with his burly build, square face, and very tanned skin, said with both amusement and helplessness, "Didn't you see the news? Several of our folks were struck by lightning. Fortunately, it wasn't people from our Team 2 who died. Damn, how did they get struck by lightning?"
"Oh, I remember now," Lumian then asked, "Which hospital are Old Wang and Old Ding in?"
Xu Xinyang answered simply, "Mushu Hospital."

Chapter 950: Dinner Invitation

It's really Mushu Hospital... Lumian wasn't surprised at all by Xu Xinyang's answer.

He grunted in acknowledgment. "Alright, Team Lead."

He had thought about it. As an important base for evil gods to influence the dream city, and with some degree of cooperation with the Celestial Worthy, Mushu Hospital might be unavoidable for many things to come. It wasn't a matter of cautiously avoiding it or not entering, pretending it didn't exist.

So, rather than that, why not take advantage of the daytime, while their actions hadn't yet reached a critical stage, while he still had another chance to enter, and while he had a reasonable and legitimate excuse, to go take a look and investigate in person. Of course, the underground floors that likely represented the Abyss and Mr. Fool's psychological dark side still couldn't be recklessly entered.

After seeing off Xu Xinyang, Lumian stayed in the surveillance room until almost noon. He and his shift partner Old Xia waited for their colleagues to relieve them, then went downstairs together to the Intis Group staff cafeteria located in the annex building of the Tech Building for lunch.

They didn't get meal allowances, and the cafeteria wasn't free, but it had a wide variety of dishes, and the prices were kept quite cheap through company subsidies. So, whether from headquarters or branch offices, employees in this building all liked eating in the cafeteria. Even Mr. Huang himself would come eat there occasionally to check the quality of the food.

The only problem was that during the lunch rush, the cafeteria was packed. Higher-income employees preferred to order takeout or dine at nearby malls.

As security guards, when they could go to the cafeteria depended on when their colleagues came to relieve them. Everyone tacitly agreed to come a bit earlier to avoid the peak hours.

Lumian got steamed eggs with minced meat, stir-fried yellow chives and meat with pickled peppers, fried chicken leg, cucumber and pork soup, and a big bowl of rice. He found a corner spot with Old Xia and listened to him chat about the antics of the Aurora Company folks while eating.

Old Xia clicked his tongue and said, "Their boss is an exhibitionist, or the M in S&M, often with whip marks on his body..."

Say more, slander some more, I love hearing it... Lumian nodded along while inwardly muttering.

Suddenly, his phone vibrated twice.

He picked it up and saw a message from "A name that leaves a deep impression on you", which was Anderson Hood: "Is that friend you mentioned actually yourself?"
Lumian smiled and replied using voice input: "You could interpret it that way."
He felt that in conversations between Hunters, whoever got anxious first, whoever got angry first, whoever felt guilty first, would lose.
Only by adjusting oneself to a state where nothing mattered could one stand undefeated.
After about 20-30 seconds, Anderson replied: "Painting requires talent, I hope you have it.
"Our tutoring school doesn't have painting classes, but I know a decent studio, that's where I learned. If you're interested, tomorrow night at 7, meet me at the entrance of Jinxiu Dongfang Community on Sifang Street, and I'll take you for a tour."
At night? Lumian pondered for a moment before replying: "Alright, thank you."
He remembered that Colorful Hostel was on Sifang Street, but the interior renovation and decoration hadn't been completed yet.
...
In the Administrative Department, large office.
Luo Shan stretched lazily, walked over to Franca's desk, and asked with a smile, "What are you eating for lunch? I don't want to join the crowd at the cafeteria."
Without waiting for Franca to respond, she lowered her voice and said, "Other departments all find time to have team dinners to welcome new employees, only our Administrative Department doesn't.
"Mainly because those ladies don't want to or think little of us, which is fine, but the worry is that they'll insist on going, wanting to find some free helpers. Tsk, can you imagine how that would develop? Sarcasm and veiled barbs are the norm, with people crying, arguing, or even wanting to get physical not being uncommon. It left a bunch of trouble to deal with afterward, so Old Zhang simply stopped organizing departmental dinners. Those who get along well just gather privately, however they want."
Franca listened with relish and said expectantly, "I wonder when Mr. Huang will next come to the Administrative Department."
The scene then would surely be spectacular; she wanted to witness it.
Demonesses inevitably tended to have a bit of a chaos-loving inclination, which was very justifiable when it came to watching drama.

"Mr. Huang probably won't come in the next few days. He has VIPs to entertain, and even if he comes to the company, he'll go to the 16th floor," Luo Shan disclosed Mr. Huang's whereabouts.
Zaratulstra? Franca was very attentive and serious about this matter.
Besides the items listed in the action outline, they also had to guard against the Celestial Worthy and evil gods doing bad things to Zhou Mingrui in the dream city. They needed to discover and prevent it early.
Moreover, this could also accumulate inspiration to help them formulate an awakening plan—how the Celestial Worthy's subordinates did it, and they could try to do the opposite.
"What a pity," Franca said with a look of regret.
She then asked curiously, "Won't Mr. Huang bring the VIP to tour the company?"
"He has before," Luo Shan suddenly paused, her voice becoming even lower, "That day Zhou Mingrui happened to be on sick leave. Franca, could that long-named VIP be the destroyer you mentioned, sent from the future to the present by evil forces? Was Zhou Mingrui's sick leave arranged by your people?"
A Painter's spiritual intuition is quite strong... Franca smiled and said, "Is that VIP called Zaratulstra?"
Luo Shan nodded solemnly.
"Then it is," Franca confirmed her earlier guess.
Luo Shan was silent for a few seconds, then her eyes lit up and she said,
"Why don't I ask Zhou Mingrui to have dinner with us? That way you'll have a chance to meet and chat with him."
Holy crap... So fast? So direct? Franca felt a bit shocked.
She had thought it would take her and Lumian a week or two to naturally contact Zhou Mingrui through work matters before reaching a point where they could add each other on WeChat or have casual chats.
Who knew that on her first day of work, Luo Shan would invite Zhou Mingrui to have dinner together!
It's too, too fast...
This progress is too advanced; I'm not ready yet...
Seeing that Franca hadn't answered, Luo Shan smiled and said, "Zhou Mingrui owes me several meals. Every time he asks me for information, he says he'll treat me to a meal next time, but so far he's only done it once.
"Hmm, welcoming my bestie to the company is a good reason."
As she spoke, she picked up her phone and started tapping out a message to Zhou Mingrui.

After a while, Luo Shan waved her phone and said, "He agreed, but said it would be dinner tomorrow, because he has to work overtime tonight, and tech people have too little lunch break time to go eat something nice."
He agreed just like that... No stress reaction, no excuses? Franca suddenly recalled an old saying: The best way to get close to someone is to know the people around them.
Helping Luo Shan was indeed the right choice... This is karma rewarding kindness! Franca pondered for a moment, then said to Luo Shan, "Zhou Mingrui seemed a bit concerned about those paintings you had on your desk before. He didn't refuse your invitation, but agreed to it. Maybe he also wants to confirm or probe something..."
Without waiting for Luo Shan to respond, Franca added, "If that's really the case, it's a good thing."
The only question is, does dinner count as nighttime?
This goes against the plan in the action outline, and could lead to confusion and ambiguity in the experimental results...
It shouldn't count if it's not completely dark, right?
...
At 4:30 in the afternoon, after another round of patrolling the floors, Lumian and Old Xia came to the underground parking lot of the Tech Building. They saw Team Lead Xu Xinyang sitting in a dark gray SUV, reaching out from the passenger seat and waving at them.
"Over here."
Lumian and Old Xia walked over and sat in the spacious back seat.
"Just us few?" Old Xia looked out the window.
Xu Xinyang laughed.
"Who goes to visit patients at a hospital in a big group? The nurses wouldn't let us in!
"Just the four of us, Zhao is driving, the others will wait directly at the dinner place."
Zhao was the young man sitting in the driver's seat, looking a bit chubby from the side.
At this time, the roads were still fairly clear. Before 5 o'clock, Lumian and the others had arrived outside Mushu Hospital.
Two young men each carrying a box of fruit and a bag of nutritional supplements followed behind Xu Xinyang and Old Xia as they walked in.
The lobby of Mushu Hospital was no different from when Lumian last came, ordinary, with people coming and going. Only occasionally could one notice certain orderlies with indifferent gazes and slightly mechanical movements.

Lumian withdrew his gaze, confirming that his spirituality gave no warning and there were no abnormalities around, then entered the elevator going up and arrived on the 12th floor.
Exiting the elevator area and turning into the ward, after pushing open the door, what met his eyes was a quiet nurses' station and a corridor extending into darkness.
The light at the end of the corridor seemed to be broken, not yet repaired.
Led by a nurse who looked very normal, they entered a double patient room where Old Wang and Old Ding were.
Before Lumian, Zhao, and Old Xia could get a clear look at the patients' condition, two bedside family members rushed in front of Xu Xinyang, speaking one after another:
"Team Lead Xu, this is definitely a work-related injury for our Old Wang!"
"Boohoo, Team Lead Xu, our Old Ding almost died, look at him, look at him, who knows how long it will take to recover."
"..."
Xu Xinyang finally found an opportunity and pressed his right hand down.
"Ladies, this will definitely count as a work injury. Mr. Huang said that not only will there be compensation according to national standards, but the company will also give an additional sum, as well as cover all medical expenses beyond insurance, and continue to pay normal wages until Old Wang and Old Ding fully recover and can return to work. We won't let one of us bleed, sweat, and cry!"
While Xu Xinyang was comforting the family members, Lumian and the others turned their gaze to the hospital beds, seeing the two patients wrapped from head to toe in white bandages, with only their eyes, noses, and mouths exposed.
Old Xia couldn't help but lean close to Lumian and say in a low voice, "I don't mean to be unkind, but they really look funny like this. I thought only TV shows wrapped people up like this. Didn't expect to see it in real life too."
Lumian didn't respond to Old Xia, because he thought of mummies.
Mummies that were said to have close connections with the Wraith pathway controlled by the Mother Tree of Desire.
And this was Mushu Hospital.

Chapter 951: Everything as Usual

Lumian looked again at Old Wang and Old Ding, who were wrapped from head to toe in white bandages, carefully examining their condition and the details around them.

"Don't disturb the patients," the nurse who had led Lumian and the others into the ward reminded them before walking out and returning to the nurses' station.

At this moment, the patient who was presumably Old Ding woke up, influenced by the conversation between his family members and Xu Xinyang, slowly opening his eyes.

Contrasted against the surrounding circles of white bandages, Old Ding's deep brown eyes were noticeably darker than normal, taking quite a while to regain focus.

Lumian didn't notice any abnormalities worth noting.

Xu Xinyang walked to the bedside and greeted Old Ding, who lacked energy and spoke indistinctly.

Lumian listened for about 20-30 seconds, then glanced at the still sleeping Old Wang, and stepped back gradually, inconspicuously and without drawing attention, to the doorway of the ward.

He then examined the doctor and nurse information posted outside the ward:

"Attending Physician: Huang Puda.

"Head Nurse: Qi Fang."

From the photo, it was clear that Qi Fang was the nurse who had just led Lumian and the others to the ward.

Names not mentioned in the files... The name style is that of "locals" in the dream city, not like "foreigners"... Doesn't seem to be any problem... Lumian returned to the ward and followed Team Lead Xu Xinyang in greeting Old Ding and the two family members again.

They didn't stay long to avoid disturbing the patients' rest.

Walking through the corridor, past the nurses' station, and towards the ward's main door, Lumian casually examined the bulletin boards on both sides of the wall.

One side featured scientific achievements and introductions to some diseases and injuries, while the other side had brief introductions of all the doctors and nurses in this ward, arranged in several rows.

Lumian's gaze fell on the topmost photo.

It was a female doctor with a plump appearance, fairly good features, and slightly brownish eyes, looking to be in her forties.

Her introduction read: "Roland, Associate Dean..."

Lumian's first reaction was "Isn't that Franca's last name?",

followed by a sudden chill down his spine, almost making him shudder.
He remembered another Roland.
It was a prominent name he had heard about while investigating the sea prayer ritual in Port Santa of the Feynapotter Kingdom: Matriarch Roland of the Church of Earth Mother!
This was equivalent to the pontiff or pope in other orthodox churches!
The Planter pathway has the Doctor Sequence, and Roland, as the matriarch of the Church of Earth Mother, is most likely an Angel of this pathway, which is equivalent to one of the strongest doctors in the real world. Her corresponding manifestation in the dream city serving as the associate dean and chief surgeon of a hospital, certainly qualifies and aligns with Mr. Fool's subconscious cognition... But the problem is, this is Mushu Hospital... Lumian naturally withdrew his gaze and walked towards the ward exit with Xu Xinyang, his expression unchanged.
He remembered that the information from the Major Arcana card holders didn't mention Roland having a corresponding dream manifestation.
Is it unknown, or considered unimportant, a mere NPC? Is Roland becoming the associate dean of Mushu Hospital woven by Mr. Fool's subconscious dream, representing some of his cognition, or has Roland's dream manifestation been exploited by the Great Mother due to issues with Her own pathway? Or is this one of the "achievements" of Mushu Hospital? If Mother Roland is the associate dean, then who is the dean? Lumian felt he needed to report this to the Major Arcana card holders.
This didn't contradict his idea of first "testing" on his own and gaining personal results. He was worried that if there was a problem with the dream image, it might affect Matriarch Roland in the real world, and wanted to remind the Major Arcana card holders.
Leaving the ward, Lumian curiously asked, "Team Lead Xu, what's the name of the dean of Mushu Hospital? I haven't seen any news about him."
Xu Xinyang entered the elevator area and thought for a few seconds before saying, "Strange, odd, I haven't heard of him either.
"I only know that Mr. Huang used to have a good relationship with this hospital, donated a lot of money to them, and helped establish them."
Money... a lot of money... donations... Lumian thought this must have been done when Emperor Roselle was still corrupted by the Great Mother.

This also made Mushu Hospital financially strong, seemingly not too worried about "money" issues, unlike the Colorful Hostel of the Fantasy Association, which still had to exploit its bestowed and believers for renovation.
While waiting for the slow elevator, Old Xia suddenly asked Xu Xinyang, "Team Lead Xu, do you think Old Wang and Old Ding can recover to their original state? They used to be such good fighters."
"Are you eyeing the positions they left behind?" Xu Xinyang asked with a smile.
In the Intis Group, the Security Department wasn't just about security guards, but also had real security personnel responsible for protecting Mr. Huang's family and important guests, providing security services for jewelry exhibitions, antique exhibitions, arms deals, etc. held by various companies of the group, and protecting important mining sites through cooperation with local armed forces.
Old Wang and Old Ding were security personnel, earning much higher salaries than ordinary security guards, with additional allowances if dispatched externally.
"I'll pass; can't take that risk, and don't have that ability," Old Xia waved his hands repeatedly, looking scared.
Xu Xinyang looked at Lumian and smiled, saying, "Originally, I wanted someone in their fifties or sixties, but the HR department sent me the youngest one. Fortunately, Director Grimm is satisfied."
"Why look for someone in their fifties or sixties?" Old Xia asked on behalf of Lumian, he himself looking to be only in his thirties or forties.
Xu Xinyang chuckled and said, "Security guard is a service position. You're all too young, not smooth enough, and can't bring yourselves to make a scene or throw tantrums.
"Think about it, if you had a conflict with an employee in the building, which one of you would be able to lie down on the ground without any burden, clutch your chest and cry out in pain, saying you can't breathe? A man in his fifties or sixties wouldn't have such concerns, they'd dare to lie down, dare to shout, dare to extort. In that case, would the employee on the other side dare to take it seriously and continue to make trouble? Having an elder is like having a treasure!"
Lumian understood that Xu Xinyang was reprimanding him, thinking that getting into trouble with someone on his first day of work showed inexperience.
Zhao, not catching Xu Xinyang's implied meaning, asked foolishly, "Then why not directly find someone over seventy?"

"What if they really fall ill on duty?" Xu Xinyang scolded Zhao impatiently, "You don't care when it's Mr. Huang's money, do you?"
Zhao giggled, not refuting Xu Xinyang.
At this moment, an elevator finally stopped on this floor, already crowded with people.
Entering the elevator and following its slow descent, Lumian suddenly had a feeling that he and the others were sinking into the dark seabed.
It was an illusion brought on by his spirituality.
The illusion quickly disappeared as the elevator stopped at the next floor.
As the elevator continued to stop at various floors, Old Xia grumbled, "It's a bit cold, isn't the air conditioning too strong..."
You didn't say that when we took the elevator up earlier... Is it because we're currently descending, getting closer to the underground floors? Lumian thoughtfully observed the other people in the elevator, noticing that they all looked slightly pale from the chilly air conditioning and cold wind.
There were no other unusual situations beyond this.
When the elevator stopped on the first floor, Lumian suddenly felt as if it would plummet in free fall, and instinctively stepped out quickly.
The feeling of overly effective air conditioning disappeared instantly.
Lumian raised his hand to pinch his nose, following Xu Xinyang and the others towards the main entrance of Mushu Hospital.
Just now, he had caught a whiff of blood.
Exiting the hospital building, the sunlight, only slightly weaker than before, instantly brought a sense of golden brightness and clarity.
"That's why I hate hospitals," Old Xia muttered.
Lumian half-turned his body, looking at the bustling lobby and the upper floors, summarizing in his mind, There are indeed some abnormal details, but most of the doctors, nurses, and patients here still seem fine...
If they all had problems, this city would have been corrupted to an unimaginable degree long ago, and Mr. Fool's subconscious would surely have reacted...
As thoughts raced through his mind, Lumian suddenly saw a face pressed against a glass window on the twelfth floor.
That face was bound with strips of white bandages, with only the eyes, nostrils, and mouth uncovered.
He seemed to have seen Lumian too, and began to struggle frantically, then was forcibly dragged away from the window area

as if being pulled by one person after another from behind.
Before Lumian could react, he had disappeared.
But Lumian recognized him.
He was Old Wang, who had been sleeping the whole time during their visit.
Lumian turned back, pretending he hadn't seen anything.
If not for the appointment with Anderson tomorrow night, he would have wanted to storm the twelfth floor ward right now to rescue Old Wang and see what unexpected changes might occur.
For Lumian, this wasn't something he couldn't do, but it should be done after completing most of the experiments.
...
In a beef offal hot pot restaurant.
Having booked a large private room with two tables set up, Xu Xinyang held baijiu—a Chinese spirit—and beer, smiling at Lumian and asking, "Can you drink?"
"I can drink a little," Lumian answered somewhat fearfully.
"As long as you can drink, that's fine. Drinking style is working style, drinking etiquette is personal etiquette. Those who don't drink can't fit into our Security Team 2," Xu Xinyang pointed at the subordinates around and said, "Except for those on duty, dispatched, hospitalized, or on leave, everyone is here. Make a good impression."
Lumian had heard from Franca that many companies' welcome parties for new employees were mainly to test obedience and haze the newcomers, making them learn to be compliant, with drinking being the most common method.
"I'll... I'll try my best," Lumian squeezed out a smile with a heavy expression.
Two hours later, amidst various bottles of alcohol piled up on the table and in the corners, Lumian held a bottle of strong liquor, smiling broadly at Xu Xinyang and saying, "Team Lead Xu, drink up, why aren't you drinking?
"Come on, let's finish what's left."
Xu Xinyang, his face pale and movements uncoordinated, said, "No, no more drinking. Later, later I still need to go home and pay my dues to the wife."
Around him, some like Old Xia and Zhao were either slumped over the table or curled up in corners, already asleep. Some had just returned from vomiting in the bathroom, swaying unsteadily. Some gathered in groups, chattering endlessly. Others sat silently, motionless...

Chapter 952: Items That Can Be Sold

Seeing the situation, Lumian didn't insist; after all, Xu Xinyang still had the important task of paying the bill. He couldn't possibly cover for him, right? He hadn't even received his first month's salary yet!

Lumian then called over to the colleagues who had collapsed at the beginning but had now recovered, arranging for them to send the different drunks home nearby. If there was no one going in the same direction, they would call family members to come pick them up.

After finishing this task, Lumian pulled up a chair and sat down, taking a few sips of liquor as if it were a beverage. This made the few colleagues who were still somewhat sober twitch at their temples.

Is this guy the reincarnation of a wine vat?

Glancing at the still bustling main hall outside, Lumian idly took out his phone and began replying to messages and browsing trending topics.

As he scrolled, he noticed that the content being pushed to him now included a lot of alcohol-related topics, including but not limited to "Which brand of baijiu tastes best", "Beer tasting", "Legal liability for alcohol-related accidents caused by pressuring others to drink", "Civil compensation for alcohol-related sudden deaths by others at the same table", "Alcohol is a carcinogen"...

Does this count as a form of monitoring? Lumian pondered as his thumb slid across the screen.

When the last drunk was taken away, he stood up and left the hot pot restaurant. He searched for the location of Xinhong District and found it was just over two kilometers away.

Lumian decided to walk back.

It was past 8 p.m. now, and the sky had darkened completely. The scorching breeze had taken on a hint of coolness. The street lamps on both sides were bright, and there were many pedestrians passing by, brushing shoulders without disturbing each other.

Lumian savored this state of being immersed in the crowd yet detached from it, his mind gradually relaxing and unwinding.

He walked past shops playing old songs, crowds dancing to lively rhythms, and a bustling bar street, hearing shouts of "Cheers! Cheers!" coming from inside.

Returning to the rental apartment, Lumian saw Ludwig in the kitchen, standing on a small folding stool, busy preparing food. Anthony sat by the dining table, writing down his observations from the day.

His task was to continue observing Zhou Mingrui and those close to him, watching for any abnormalities or subtle changes after they came into contact with Lumian, Franca, or Jenna.
Seeing Lumian return, Anthony looked up and said, "He insists on cooking himself. He finds preparing his own breakfast and late-night snacks more enjoyable than studying textbooks or doing homework."
"He's become more human-like," Lumian said with a chuckle.
He had just sat down when the door opened and Franca and Jenna appeared in the doorway.
"There's an urgent matter we need to discuss together, to complement each other's strengths," Franca explained succinctly.
Her interaction with Zhou Mingrui today was the kind that only left a certain impression, and this already had experimental results. It wouldn't cause her to be kicked out of the dream or face restrictions.
So before taking further action, she could discreetly touch base with Lumian and the others.
She and Jenna had taken a taxi to a stop one station away and sneaked over using the shadows.
"What's the matter?" Lumian sat up a bit straighter.
"I'm having a private dinner with Zhou Mingrui tomorrow night, thanks to Luo Shan!" Franca pulled out a chair and sat down, asking Lumian with a mix of excitement and nervousness, "This doesn't affect your experiment plans, does it?"
"A little, but it's not a big problem. Taking big steps to try things out first, then working backwards to eliminate possibilities one by one is also a method of experimentation," Lumian said after a few seconds of thought.
Franca let out a sigh of relief and said, "Then let's discuss how to give Zhou Mingrui hints. This should show some progress compared to before, but not excessively, otherwise we can't rule out options and would have to risk a second attempt later."
Lumian tersely agreed and provided several approaches from a Conspirer's perspective. He then evaluated Franca's contingency plans and explanations, while Jenna helped fill in any gaps from an Instigator's standpoint.
Anthony was responsible for empathizing with Zhou Mingrui's possible psychological activities and instinctive reactions, even role-playing as Zhou Mingrui during rehearsals.
After twenty to thirty minutes of discussion, Franca finally had two feasible plans that were likely to achieve her goals.
"Brainstorming really does work!" she exclaimed sincerely.
Jenna then recounted her experience of selling the painting at the

Star Dream Provisions Store, not omitting a single detail.
After listening to the end, Franca thoughtfully took out the Beyonder characteristic obtained from the reanimated Panatiya from her Traveler's Bag.
She showed it briefly before quickly stuffing it back. "Can we sell this thing to the Star Dream Provisions Store?
"We can't use it for now anyway, so why not exchange it for money and find a way to rent useful items? Whether the mission succeeds or not later, the Major Arcana card holders should reimburse us or help buy it back."
"We can try, but I think that individual probably won't accept it," Lumian said as he also took out an item from his Traveler's Bag.
It was the corpse wax candle obtained from the Blue Avenger.
Looking at this pale yellow candle with a reddish tinge, Lumian thought for a moment before saying, "We discussed before that Demonesses might have symbolic meaning and special uses in the dream city. Now I want to say that Hunters might also have significance: I'm a Hunter, the first person killed was the Oracle who was also a Hunter, and Anderson, who is clearly abnormal now, is also a Hunter.
"Given this premise, items related to Demonesses and Hunters might prove useful later on, and we can't predict which ones. That individual will probably not accept them, instead letting us keep them and wait for the right opportunity.
"Hmm, we can try. If She doesn't accept them, it would provide initial validation for my theory."
Jenna, Franca, and Anthony all nodded thoughtfully.
The four of them then took out many mystical items they weren't currently using, planning to have Jenna take them to the Star Dream Provisions Store to sell the next day.
Looking at these items, Jenna pondered for a few seconds before saying, "That individual is a true deity... Isn't it somewhat disrespectful to bring such a hodgepodge of items of varying value?"
Anthony nodded in agreement with Jenna's statement.
Franca added, "Yeah, it feels like we're treating Her like a junk collector..."
As she spoke, Franca fell silent, as did Lumian and the others.
In the end, they selected only three high-value items.
After discussing everything, Franca stood up, stretching her arms and said, "I'm a bit excited and nervous thinking about substantially hinting at Mr. Fool's dream manifestation tomorrow night."
"What time is your appointment tomorrow night?" Lumian asked.

"Seven o'clock. Luo Shan said those tech folks rarely leave work on time, so we need to allow for extra time." Franca also mentioned the meeting place.
Seven o'clock, huh... Lumian raised his right hand and rubbed his chin.
At this point, Jenna carefully said, "Don't be too nervous. You might not even manage to meet up successfully. I've seen posts on those apps where people set a time and place for a date, but their busy boyfriends or girlfriends end up working overtime at the last minute and have to cancel."
"That's a possibility..." Franca was momentarily dumbfounded.
...
The next morning, Jenna once again arrived at the Star Dream Provisions Store.
She took a ride-hailing car as before, but this time encountered no obstacles or abnormalities.
Walking up to the checkout counter in the back of the Star Dream Provisions Store, Jenna politely asked, "Do you take this item?"
She placed the Beyonder characteristic from the reanimated Panatiya on the counter.
In the suddenly dimmed environment, the shopkeeper raised her head, looked at it, then shook her head and said, "We don't take this one."
So you really don't accept it... Does it need to be made into an item, or is it as Lumian speculated, that things related to the Demoness and Hunter pathways will have important uses later? After putting away Panatiya's Beyonder characteristic, Jenna took out the corpse wax candle in a small glass bottle. "Do you take this?"
"We don't take that either," the shopkeeper said without a trace of impatience on her beautiful face.
Not taking items either... Jenna thoughtfully put away the corpse wax candle.
Then, she took out an item from her Traveler's Bag.
It was a set of silver-white full body armor.
Pride Armor!
Jenna didn't try to hide the special nature of the Traveler's Bag as she placed the Pride Armor sideways on the counter.
The next second, she noticed a faint smile appear on the shopkeeper's face.
Almost simultaneously, the Pride Armor moved.
Like a crab, it moved sideways, clanking towards the entrance of the Star Dream Provisions Store.
However, the silver-white full body armor moved slower and slower, gradually turning upright.

When it was just two or three steps from the exit, it came to a complete stop, motionless.
It seemed to have turned into ordinary armor.
At this point, Jenna and the shopkeeper were both behind it, facing each other.
It showed no reaction.
In her astonishment, Jenna heard the shopkeeper say with a hint of amusement, "I'll take this item. 30,000 still."
So items like the Pride Armor can indeed be sold... But why did the Pride Armor react so strongly at first, and why isn't it even confronting the people behind it now? Though puzzled, Jenna didn't dare to ask.
...
Lumian, who learned he would be switching to the mid-shift next week, returned to the rental apartment.
He left at 6 p.m., arriving half an hour early at the entrance of Jinxiu Dongfang Community on Sifang Street.
He wanted to scout the environment first, as it might come in handy later.
As Lumian's gaze swept the area, he suddenly saw a familiar figure.
It was Anderson Hood, wearing a black T-shirt with abstract patterns.
Anderson also saw Lumian and walked over, smiling as he said, "I'm in the habit of arriving early."
Lumian responded with a smile, "Me too."
Anderson nodded. "Since we're both early, let's start the tour earlier. The friend you mentioned was indeed yourself."
"If that's what you want to think, I can't do anything about it," Lumian said with a smile, not arguing.
Anderson didn't seem to mind as he turned and led him into the Jinxiu Dongfang Community.

Chapter 953: Art Studio

Sifang Street was located near a famous scenic spot in Yangdu, part of the old town area. The Jinxiu Dongfang Community was also quite old, with no building exceeding six floors or having elevators installed.

Lumian followed behind Anderson, turning towards the building closest to the community entrance.

As they climbed the stairs, he couldn't help but raise his right hand to pinch his nose.

A mixture of strong odors permeated the air.

Anderson turned sideways and laughed. "The whole building is being renovated."

He had somehow already stuffed two wads of white paper into his nostrils.

"Why is everything being renovated?" Lumian didn't hide his confusion.

Anderson glanced at him and said with a smile, "This gated community is too old. Most owners have moved away and chosen to rent out their vacant apartments. Someone has rented all the rooms in this building, planning to..."

At this point, Anderson paused, his smile becoming more pronounced in the dim stairwell as his voice deepened. "Planning to open a boutique hostel."

Colorful, right? And that person is you, right? Lumian was somewhat mentally prepared for this and frowned slightly as he said, "Isn't there still an art studio in this building? How can you say all the rooms have been rented?"

Anderson tightened the white paper wads in his nostrils. "Is it possible that the person who opened the art studio is the same one who rented the other rooms?

"The boutique hostel he wants to open is adjacent to scenic spots, hidden in a gated community, with painting as its theme."

Lumian, still pinching his nose, feigned sudden realization and said, "I see."

Due to the strong renovation smells permeating the stairwell, the two didn't slow their pace as they conversed, quickly reaching the top floor, which was the sixth floor.

The doors of both units here were open, and on the wall facing the stairwell was a brightly colored mural. At its center were four characters:

"Mute Art Studio"

"That name is quite... special," Lumian commented sincerely.

By this point, the renovation smells had faded.

Anderson removed the white paper wads from his nostrils and explained earnestly,
"Painting is done with hands, not mouths. 'Mute' represents the studio's expectations for its students: focus, quietness, and dedication."
"That's a great explanation," Lumian applauded.
Anderson wasn't offended and said with a smile, "This isn't my forced interpretation, it's what the studio owner said."
"My sister once taught me dialectics, believing that even the worst words can have a positive side. Do you think that's right?" Lumian asked with a smile.
Anderson nodded. "If you think it's right, then it's right."
He led Lumian towards the door on the left.
Lumian didn't rush in, standing at the doorway to survey the fairly spacious living room.
There was a piece of darkness with only a hint of golden-red "Dawn" in the distance, a "Storm" with deep blue waves surging, "Pilgrims" with numerous blurred figures walking across a wasteland, and a grotesque "Monster" emerging from the seabed alongside "Pirates" trying to save their ship.
The "Pirates" painting suddenly reminded Lumian of the latest volume of "The Great Adventurer". He saw vines growing from the figures' heads, bearing watermelons, while milky white liquid sprayed everywhere on the deck.
Is this recreating Gehrman Sparrow's experience? As Lumian pondered this, he stared for two seconds at the sea monster that resembled a giant leech with its maw full of sharp teeth.
Anderson walked to the easel in the middle of the living room and turned around.
Lumian looked around once more before slowly following him in, "curiously" asking, "Where's the studio owner?"
Anderson raised his right hand and pointed at himself.
"You're the studio owner?" Lumian "surprisingly" confirmed.
Anderson nodded.
Lumian suddenly smiled. "Why aren't you speaking? Has your throat suddenly gone hoarse? Have you become mute?"
Anderson, wearing the black T-shirt, began using sign language.
Lumian couldn't understand what he was expressing even after watching for a while, and thoughtfully said, "I wonder if there's an app for translating sign language..."
Anderson picked up a paintbrush, took a piece of white paper from nearby, and wrote something in dark red.
Unlike Lumian and the others, he could write in the common script of the dream city.

Lumian focused his gaze and saw a sentence written on the white paper: "It's best not to speak in the studio, treat yourself as if you're mute."
Lumian raised an eyebrow, but before he could speak, he saw Anderson grimly add another line in dark red paint: "You just spoke."
Lumian suddenly felt a chill on the back of his neck, as if a cool breeze had blown past.
He didn't turn around, seemingly feeling nothing.
Anderson wrote another passage, the dark red paint appearing to become much brighter: "Do you know this person?"
After writing, he turned the easel around to show the painting on it to Lumian.
It depicted a woman, tall with a slender face, light blue and clear eyes, strikingly beautiful with a peculiar sharpness.
This was Lumian himself.
It was his female form!
Lumian's face broke into a smile as he answered Anderson's question, "I don't know her."
As his voice echoed, something cold and wet suddenly pressed against him from behind.
Lumian quickly reached back to grab it, his palm suddenly erupting with crimson flames.
As the flames compressed layer by layer, he saw what had attacked him.
It was the giant "leech" from the "Monster" oil painting. Its pinkish, nearly transparent body had extended from the painting, its maw opened to its fullest extent, large enough to bite off an adult's head.
13:25
Looking at the densely packed, ghastly white teeth with blood-colored roots, Lumian directly slapped the fireball in his hand, which had turned from crimson to nearly white, onto it.
Boom!
The fireball exploded instantly, enveloping the sea monster that had emerged from the painting.
The shockwave carrying flames quickly swept outwards, threatening to ignite every painting, every easel, and every person here!
At that moment, from the "Storm" oil painting, the azure seawater surged out, pouring into the room with a splash, extinguishing all the flames.
Lumian's figure disappeared from where he stood, reappearing behind the mute Anderson.
His eyes had turned completely iron-black, reflecting a ghastly

white.
Lumian clenched his right fist and thrust it out with a smacking sound, striking Anderson's back.
This punch, accompanied by a thunderous explosion, tore through Anderson's flesh, penetrated his body, and hit the oil painting of Lumian's female form and its easel.
The mute Anderson's body suddenly ruptured, quickly thinning and transforming into a portrait painting with a huge hole.
This portrait, along with the oil painting of Lumian's female form, was ignited by crimson flames, turning into black, light ashes in just a few seconds.
As the mute Anderson reverted to a painting, both the azure seawater that had poured into the room and the sea monsters eagerly trying to emerge suddenly vanished, leaving only the motionless oil paintings.
Lumian scanned the room and found that a giant "leech" was indeed missing from the "Monster" painting. The studio floor was covered with water stains and incompletely burned paper scraps.
The place became eerily quiet, with no living beings present except for Lumian himself.
Lumian then went through both rooms that made up the studio, finding no other abnormalities.
Those paintings were no longer eerie or mysterious.
He left the place, going down the stairs to see tenants of the community gathering in small groups, looking around.
They had heard the sound of an explosion earlier but couldn't find its source or any damage to the buildings in the community. They could only attribute it to a high-speed fighter jet passing overhead.
Lumian passed through the group and returned to the community entrance.
Suddenly, a figure was reflected in his eyes.
The figure had blonde hair and blue eyes, wearing a white shirt and black trousers, with hands in pockets, looking like someone watching the commotion.
Anderson!
Anderson Hood!
Upon seeing Lumian, Anderson asked with a surprised expression, "You're already here? Have you already entered?"
Lumian smiled. "I'm in the habit of arriving early."
Anderson smiled as well. "Me too."
As Lumian walked up to him, he asked with a smile, "Did you enjoy yourself earlier?"
"Very much," Lumian maintained his smile, saying meaningfully, "I'd like to do it again."

Anderson Hood nodded slightly.
He was about to speak when he suddenly looked around.
"Maybe next time," Anderson said with a smile, shifting his gaze back. "Let's keep in touch via WeChat."
He raised his right palm, holding his phone.
He didn't mention visiting the art studio or ask if Lumian's friend was interested in taking classes. Lumian didn't bring up these topics either, waving his hand and saying, "I'll be going then."
"See you." Anderson waved back.
Lumian walked past the tutor towards the roadside.
A gray sedan pulled up and stopped in front of him.
Lumian opened the door, got in, and said to Anthony in the driver's seat, "Let's go to Worker's Road."
Anthony nodded and merged into traffic.
Franca, Luo Shan, and Zhou Mingrui had arranged to have dinner on Worker's Road tonight at a taro chicken hotpot restaurant.
As the car drove, chomping sounds continuously came from the back seat.
...
On Worker's Road, inside the "Yizhou Roast Chicken" taro chicken hotpot restaurant.
Franca and Luo Shan had arrived earlier, choosing a window-side table. They had ordered chicken and taro but hadn't selected any other dishes yet.
Each of them had ordered a bottle of iced soy milk, not finding any issue with Zhou Mingrui choosing such a noisy, lively place that wasn't quite bourgeois enough for a meal.
What mattered was whether the food tasted good!
At nearly 6:50 p.m., Zhou Mingrui, wearing a black shirt, walked in.
"Over here, over here!" Luo Shan waved cheerfully.
Zhou Mingrui weaved through the other tables, came over, and said as he sat down, "Some extra work came up just before clocking out."
"We agreed on 7 p.m.," Luo Shan said, not minding at all. She pointed at Franca and said, "This is my neighbor and colleague, Luo Fu."
Zhou Mingrui glanced at Franca and said with a smile, "We've met before. Let's order first."
Franca looked outside at the darkening sky, feeling a bit uneasy.

Chapter 954: Warning

Since Franca and Luo Shan had already pre-ordered the chicken and taro and requested them to be cooked immediately, the three of them soon began enjoying the steaming hot delicacies.

Franca asked the waiter to fill her dipping sauce bowl with a medium-spicy soup base. She added some minced garlic, chopped green onions, and cilantro, then poured in some oyster sauce. This combination provided saltiness and umami flavors, along with a hint of sweetness, nicely complementing the spicy taste. Franca particularly enjoyed preparing her hotpot dipping sauce this way.

She glanced at Zhou Mingrui and noticed his choices were similar to hers.

Great minds think alike... Franca picked up a piece of taro first instead of chicken. The taro had been pre-cooked to softness in a pressure cooker. After rolling it in the dipping sauce and blowing on it for about ten seconds, she took a bite. It was full of the fragrance of starch and the taro's own flavor. The taro had also absorbed the spiciness of the soup base and the deliciousness of the oil. Combined with the salty umami and slight sweetness of the oyster sauce, it made her salivate quickly, effectively reducing the residual heat.

Franca ate three pieces of taro before remembering to try a piece of chicken.

She would rank this as one of the top 3 vegetarian options in hotpot, along with potato slices and leafy stem lettuce.

The three ate quietly for a while. After filling their stomachs a bit, Luo Shan actively initiated various topics to prevent any awkwardness.

With her livening up the atmosphere, the three chatted quite happily, covering everything from company gossip and rumors to the recent job market and the current situations of former colleagues.

The handsome security guard naturally became part of the conversation, with Luo Shan expressing regret that he hadn't been guarding the entrance recently, preventing her from seeing him in person.

Unexpectedly, Zhou Mingrui asked about Franca's professional background, curious about why she changed careers right after graduation.

Franca shared her genuine feelings from her student days, "Working like a dog and earning little, while endangering my life; having to slog until your thirties or forties to barely have a decent income. I felt I couldn't endure that hardship, so I changed careers.

How many times in life can you be in your twenties?"
Zhou Mingrui expressed understanding. "There's a saying online that those who encourage others to study medicine should be struck by lightning. However, being a doctor is a late-blooming career; the older you get, the more valuable you become. I have a childhood friend who also changed careers right after graduation, but even after working two other jobs, there wasn't much success..."
At this point, Zhou Mingrui suddenly paused, unconsciously frowning before continuing, "He used connections to return to his hometown hospital as an intern doctor."
There's such a childhood friend? The documents didn't mention this... It's clearly not Peng Deng, nor is it that female childhood friend who likes to travel... As Franca pondered this, Zhou Mingrui began discussing medical topics.
Franca perfectly played the role of a former medical student who had changed careers three years ago. She could still discuss basic concepts but had mostly forgotten the more in-depth knowledge.
She wasn't a Savant after all!
Her current identity was almost an exact copy of her actual history, making it easy for her to play the role. The only difference was that she hadn't actually graduated and had changed careers six or seven years ago.
As Zhou Mingrui nodded imperceptibly, Luo Shan glanced at Franca and asked with a smile, "Have you tried that new drink? The one with the great design and a unique name."
Franca smiled back and asked instead of answering, "Have you two tried it?"
Before Zhou Mingrui and Luo Shan could answer, Franca lowered her voice, "I recently heard an urban legend about a mysterious vending machine that randomly appears in different places. It sells gacha boxes of that drink. Some of the drinks in these gacha boxes have special effects, giving the drinker abilities corresponding to the drink's name. The ones sold in supermarkets and convenience stores are just ordinary, normal drinks."
After saying this in one breath without experiencing any abnormalities herself, Franca relaxed a little.
Zhou Mingrui looked at Franca, who had changed into a white T-shirt, loose pants, and white sneakers, with her hair tied back in a ponytail after returning home. He smiled and said, "I've also seen such rumors online."
Franca's gaze fell on Luo Shan's face.
Luo Shan bit her lip and said in a deliberate ghost story tone, "Actually, I've encountered that mysterious vending machine."

Suddenly, Zhou Mingrui also looked at her.
Luo Shan laughed. "I bought a gacha box, and the drink inside was Shaman, but after drinking it, nothing happened. I didn't gain any abilities.
"Honestly, when I went to look for that vending machine a second time, it was indeed gone, not in its original location..."
Luo Shan's voice became unusually deep for the last sentence, making even the bubbles churning in the hotpot seem to freeze for a second.
Zhou Mingrui looked at her without speaking, as if assessing whether she was telling a ghost story or speaking the truth.
Luo Shan then grinned at him and said, "Didn't you drink one too? Later, I saw a similar vending machine in the company lobby. I got a bunch and gave you one bottle, the Instigator drink, right?"
"It's not like I drank it." Zhou Mingrui laughed. "Someone had given me a pack of dried mushrooms earlier, saying they were great for infusing drinks and tea. I thought I'd try it, so I poured the Instigator drink into my cup and added the dried mushrooms. Later, I got busy with something else, and when I returned to my desk, the cup was empty.
"At that time, I thought nobody in the office would be so disgusting as to drink from someone else's cup. I wondered if the cleaning lady saw the mushrooms soaking and thought it looked gross, assuming the drink was no longer wanted and helping me dispose of it.
"Thinking about it now, it is a bit strange."
He and Luo Shan's back-and-forth made the urban legend seem increasingly real.
Franca didn't appear scared at all. She looked around and lowered her voice, "Since you're both being so honest, I'll tell the truth too. To be frank, I've also encountered that vending machine."
Luo Shan played along and asked, "What did you get?"
Franca looked at Zhou Mingrui, pushed up her black-framed glasses on the bridge of her nose, and smiled noticeably. "Assassin."
Zhou Mingrui quietly looked at her, waiting for her to continue.
Franca added with a smile, "I'm a fan of 'Assassin's Creed.' Look, my WeChat name is even 'True Hidden Blade.'"
As she spoke, she took out her phone and showed her WeChat name to Zhou Mingrui, then continued, "I was very satisfied with the name of that drink. I imagined myself becoming an assassin, able to perform a real Leap of Faith and hide in shadows, undetectable..."
Franca deliberately described all the changes and abilities brought

by the Assassin potion, wanting Zhou Mingrui to believe that she had either actually drunk the Assassin drink or was very knowledgeable about Assassin-related matters.
As she described this, her heart involuntarily began to beat faster, and she became tense, feeling as if she was about to be kicked out of the dream.
Zhou Mingrui tactically took a sip of his iced soy milk and ate a piece of taro.
After putting down his chopsticks, he smiled at Franca and Luo Shan and said, "That's my dream too."
Franca took the opportunity to warn, "Then you should be careful. I saw in the related rumors that there's a big problem with the follow-up drinks to Assassin. It's like leveling up in a game—after drinking to a certain level, terrible things happen."
"What kind of terrible things?" Luo Shan asked curiously.
Franca gently shook her head in response. "I don't know either.
"I've only heard that after the Assassin drink comes the Instigator drink, and the problems start after the Instigator drink..."
Her voice grew progressively lower.
Zhou Mingrui ended the topic. "Alright, alright, if we keep making things up, this will eventually become a complete urban legend."
"Indeed," Franca smiled, indicating that her previous content was all made up on the spot.
Luo Shan did the same.
The three chatted about other things until it was completely dark outside, each feeling very satisfied with their meal.
After saying goodbye to Luo Shan and Franca, Zhou Mingrui walked towards the other end of the street.
The smile on his face gradually settled as various thoughts surfaced in his mind.
They don't seem to be probing me, more like hinting, suggesting, warning me...
Is there really a big problem with the follow-up to the Assassin drink?
It's also possible that because I deliberately chose a crowded and lively place, they couldn't find an opportunity to use their abilities to influence me...
I'll observe for a while and see if there are any accidents or attacks...
If I can confirm their intentions or goodwill, I can find an opportunity to really talk later...
If avoiding doesn't solve the problem, then face it...
Lost in his thoughts, Zhou Mingrui turned into a small alley and walked into the shadows.

On the other side, Franca led Luo Shan towards the nearest shopping mall.
For the next hour, she wanted to stay in a place with more people and better lighting.
Just after leaving the vicinity of the Yizhou Roast Chicken restaurant, walking about a dozen steps along the roadside, Franca suddenly felt dizzy.
The next second, she felt like a deep-sea fish suddenly pulled out of the ocean, desperately trying to breathe but unable to inhale even a trace of air. Her head and body were bizarrely expanding, like a fragile balloon being constantly inflated.
She painfully grabbed her own neck, trying to pull her trachea out of her flesh to directly connect with the air.
Her legs began to weaken, and her body started to fall to the ground. Her thoughts stuttered, and her mirror avatar lost connection with her.
Has the Celestial Worthy noticed me? This thought flashed through Franca's mind.
In the gray sedan parked on the opposite side of the road, Lumian quietly watched as Franca's face turned extremely red, her lips turning blue-black, as she grabbed her slender neck, scratching bloody marks on her fair skin.
Luo Shan stood beside her, looking bewildered and helpless.
Lumian in the passenger seat remained motionless, still quietly watching.
He saw Franca half-fallen on the ground, struggling to open her handbag and having difficulty taking out her phone before she unlocked the screen.
On the screen was a pre-prepared interface, and along with the phone were cosmetics, multi-faceted mirrors, and a small black bag.
In Lumian's vision, Franca's eyes bulged out, her expression painful and fierce as she tapped the phone screen with her thumb.
Then, she completely collapsed, dropping her handbag on the ground.
The items from her bag rolled out, and the small black bag mysteriously disappeared.
After a few seconds, Lumian in the car across the street watched as Franca slowly stood up with empty eyes. He calmly said to himself and Anthony, "Contacting Zhou Mingrui at night and hinting at the existence of Beyonder powers will result in being quickly kicked out of the dream."

Chapter 955: Aftermath

Trier, inside a luxurious villa.

Franca suddenly opened her eyes and sat up.

Her first reaction was to reach for her waist, feeling the Traveler's Bag about the size of a coin purse.

Phew... Franca let out an unconcealed sigh of relief.

At the last moment, she had proactively withdrawn before being completely kicked out of the dream. Her concern was that her personal items might be lost due to passive ejection, left behind in the dream city, and thus lost in reality as well!

In that situation, she couldn't pin her hopes on Luo Shan picking up and safeguarding her belongings, or on Lumian and Jenna, who were secretly observing, finding an opportunity to retrieve the items—that could potentially implicate them and subject them to the Celestial Worthy's scrutiny.

According to the information provided by the Major Arcana card holders, whether she left actively or passively, her dream persona, woven with the help of the lucky coin and Madam Justice, wouldn't disappear after her consciousness left the dream. The next time she entered, she would still be that person.

Of course, the current "Luo Fu" would revert to an NPC, following the subconscious manipulation of Mr. Fool or the Celestial Worthy, living her life according to her background settings and current social relationships, appearing normal on the surface.

As for whether this "Luo Fu" NPC harbored hidden issues or would contact companions, potentially implicating them in being kicked out as well, the Major Arcana card holders were currently uncertain, as they had always acted separately in their previous entries.

Based on these concerns, before actively exiting the dream, Franca struggled to take out her phone and unlock the screen.

At that moment, her screen was frozen on the "Information Shredder" mini-program, with her finger on the "Clear All Information on This Phone" button.

This was part of the contingency plan. Throughout the meal with Zhou Mingrui, except for the brief ten or so seconds when she showed him her WeChat name, Franca's phone screen had displayed the running "Information Shredder" program. In her own words, after leaving home that evening, she was prepared to "wipe the database and abscond" at any moment. She feared the Celestial Worthy might take the opportunity to scan her contact list, mark suspicious parts, and deal with them specifically.

Franca reached into the Traveler's Bag, unsurprised but still

delighted to find that the Beyonder characteristic and corresponding body parts extracted from the reanimated female corpse Panatiya were inside, real and tangible, within reach.
Correspondingly, the Pride Armor had vanished, disappearing into thin air.
Damn, the boundary between dream and reality has really been fooled. I can barely tell which side is the dream and which is reality... Franca was equally unsurprised by this, but still shocked.
Is this the terrifying aspect of a great existence?
If Mr. Fool was willing to maintain it and received certain assistance, the dream city could completely become real, as long as one didn't leave on their own!
From this perspective, the real world might also be the dream of that initial being... Thankfully, It has awakened and split...
Franca, having read many foreign myths before her transmigration, naturally made some associations.
She got out of bed, intending to go to the bathroom to relieve herself.
This was the first thing she did every morning after waking up.
After a few steps, Franca suddenly stopped.
She didn't feel any urge to urinate at all, and instead felt full, as if she had just eaten a good meal.
Franca immediately took out a mirror and used divination to confirm the current date.
Reality had also passed several days, basically consistent with the dream, though there seemed to be a slight time difference—in this bedroom, the tightly drawn curtains let in a bit of twilight, it wasn't completely dark outside yet.
Is the dream city using Backlund time?
We've been in the dream city for over a week, it's impossible not to be hungry or need to use the bathroom in reality... Damn, does eating in the dream mean being full in reality, gaining the corresponding nutrients? Does using the bathroom in the dream equate to using it in reality?
But, but I don't smell bad, and my pants are normal...
Is this Grafting the excrement at the exit to the toilet and sewers?
Or, directly opening a door, sending it to another dimension?
Right, Ludwig seemed to have said that some of the food in the dream city was real... *How could it be real?*
My goodness, it's really hard to distinguish between dream and reality...
Franca was amazed, both shocked and amused.
After about ten seconds, her mind calmed down, and she began to think about the gains from tonight's probe.

Hinting at the existence of Beyonder powers to Zhou Mingrui at night, warning him about the risks following the Assassin potion, will result in being kicked out of the dream... But not immediately, there's a reaction time, close to an hour...
Perhaps later we can use this hour to do something, like directly telling Zhou Mingrui about the Witch's transformation...
But maybe just saying the word 'Witch' would result in an immediate ejection, we'll need experiments to confirm this...
Also, we can't rely on the assumption that the Celestial Worthy's reaction time for kicking people out in this situation is always an hour. It might be that as long as Zhou Mingrui is watching, nothing unusual happens, but as soon as we say goodbye and create some distance, we're quickly kicked out...
There were two influences at the time, one trying to kick me out of the dream, and one attempting to turn me into a marionette... But the speed of becoming a marionette wasn't as dramatic as described in the documents for High-Sequence Seer pathway Beyonders, as if it was being interfered with, resulting in a tug-of-war... Mr. Fool versus the Celestial Worthy?
If I found a way to hold on for a while before being kicked out of the dream, I might have already become a marionette. It's better to withdraw proactively to reduce potential risks...
Just as Franca was thinking this, she suddenly heard a knock on the door.
"Who is it?" She tensed instinctively, though her spirituality hadn't given her any warning.
"It's us." Two voices came from outside, one belonging to Madam Magician, the other to Madam Judgment.
Franca relaxed.
If it had been only Madam Magician by herself, she would have harbored some worry, as the other was a High-Sequence Beyonder of the Apprentice pathway and could potentially be influenced or misled by that Celestial Worthy. But now, Madam Judgment was also present.
I can ask for an autograph now... Hmm, I can't ask Madam Magician why her pen name in the dream city is "Salted Fish Without Dreams"... Franca happily took out paper and pen, opened the door, and saw the two Major Arcana card holders who had already changed their clothes.
Madam Magician reminded her, "You need to wait a day and a night before you can re-enter the dream."
"Yes, I know." Franca nodded.
This was mentioned in the documents.
...

Dream city, Worker's Road.
As some passersby saw Franca fall to the ground and wanted to come help, Franca had already stood up, touched her neck, and bent down to pick up the items that had fallen to the ground.
Only then did Luo Shan come to her senses, helping to put some of the cosmetics and mirrors back into the handbag.
"What happened just now?" she asked Franca, puzzled, alert, and concerned.
Franca looked at Luo Shan and smiled reassuringly.
"Don't worry, it's an old problem. I'll be fine after a while."
You never mentioned having such a condition before... Luo Shan fell silent.
Franca continued, "Let's not go shopping, shall we? I want to rest early."
That's not what you said earlier... Luo Shan made a sound of agreement.
After the two got into a ride-share car, Lumian's right hand loosened its five fingers, and he nodded at Anthony.
Anthony started the car, drove to the intersection, and stopped again.
From the shadows, Jenna emerged, walking towards the gray sedan as if she had finally waited for her ride-share.
Lumian lowered the car window and, looking straight ahead, said, "Try to minimize contact with her tonight, and it's best to find an excuse not to sleep in Dechuang Garden."
After saying this, without waiting for Jenna's response, he raised the window, and Anthony drove the vehicle into the middle lane.
Jenna's lips bore the marks of her teeth, and her clenched fists finally relaxed.
After seeing Franca's abnormal situation, she knew she shouldn't go to her rescue to avoid implicating herself, but rationality was one thing and emotion was another, especially when Franca seemed on the verge of death during her struggle.
It took great willpower for Jenna to control herself, clearly discerning Franca's state, and waiting for her to withdraw on her own.
Dechuang Garden, Building 5.
Luo Shan said goodbye to Franca on the 15th floor and returned to her own home.
After a while, she heard the doorbell.
Outside the door was Jenna, known as Jian Na in the dream city.
The moment she saw Jenna, Luo Shan opened her mouth, wanting to say something, but then closed it, remaining silent.
Jenna looked around and said in a low voice, "Minimize contact

with Luo Fu for the next two days, and don't discuss anything related to Beyonder powers with her."
Luo Shan's expression immediately relaxed, and she spoke as if she had been holding it in for a long time.
"I knew something was off with Fu Fu. After we finished dinner with Zhou Mingrui, she suddenly wasn't right. First, she had a sudden illness, and then it was like she became a different person...
"What, what problem has occurred?"
Jenna considered for a few seconds before saying, "You can understand it this way: interfering with past history has limitations and comes at a cost. Otherwise, we could just go to Zhou Mingrui's house, control him directly, tell him everything in detail, then demonstrate some abilities, provide some evidence, and wouldn't that make him believe initially?"
"I understand now," Luo Shan had a sudden realization. "Fu Fu hinted at the existence of Beyonder powers and the problem with the Assassin potion tonight, and was affected by the self-correcting force of history, causing problems, her old condition flaring up?
"Is she now equivalent to another version of herself, similar to my previous situation?"
"You can understand it that way." Jenna nodded, not explaining in detail.
She returned to the 23rd floor and saw Franca sitting on the sofa on her phone. After some thought, she said, "I'm going to see Li Lu later, I won't be back tonight."
In the identity documents, Li Lu's father was Li Ming, and his mother was Jian Na.
Franca raised her head and said with a smile, "When will you bring Li Lu over to play? I can sleep on the sofa."
"It depends on his father's opinion," Jenna smiled, packed her toiletries, and left the apartment.
Taking the elevator to the first floor, she took out her phone and sent a message to Lumian:
"Luo Shan still remembers the story we told her, remembers the help we gave her, and shows no changes at present.
"Franca only knows about the things in the background information, remembering only the nominal social relationships."

Chapter 956: New Speculation

Jenna didn't actually go to Xinhong District to find Lumian and Ludwig. Instead, she chose a nearby hotel, booked a room, and checked if she would also be kicked out.

Nothing happened overnight. After waking up, she immediately returned to Dechuang Garden and sat in a corner of the lobby, facing sideways towards the door leading to the interior of the residential complex.

After about ten minutes, she saw Franca.

Franca was still wearing her old-fashioned black-framed glasses and dressed in a relatively conservative office lady style.

Seeing this, Jenna breathed a sigh of relief, changed her sitting posture, and turned her back to Franca to avoid meeting her.

The purpose of her early return to the residential complex was to confirm whether the current "Luo Fu's" behavior style was consistent with the previous Franca. If she had removed her disguise and changed into makeup and clothes that best highlighted her features, maximizing the charm of a Witch, Jenna would have to consider finding an excuse to prevent "Luo Fu" from going to work, delaying her for a day.

Now it seemed that the style of the "Luo Fu" NPC would continue as before.

...

Tech Building, 10th floor.

Franca sat down at her desk and leisurely made herself a cup of coffee.

At this moment, she saw Zhou Mingrui walk in, so she smiled and said, "Are you looking for Luo Shan? She hasn't arrived yet."

"I thought you two would come together." Zhou Mingrui didn't hide his surprise.

In his view, whether on the surface or secretly, Luo Shan and Luo Fu had a very good relationship and a special connection. They should be the type to wait for each other and go to work together.

Franca smiled and said, "I asked her, and she said she had something holding her up and told me not to wait for her."

"I see..." Zhou Mingrui nodded and turned to walk out of the Administrative Department.

During this period, he had been coming to ask Luo Shan about various company news more frequently than before, leading to some idle people in the Administrative Department spreading rumors about him and Luo Shan.

Zhou Mingrui walked at a moderate pace to the entrance of the Administrative Department, unable to wait for Luo Fu to ask him

to wait.
He actually came to find Luo Fu today, not Luo Shan. He originally thought she would take this opportunity to hint at something again, but unexpectedly, Luo Fu didn't even have the thought of chatting with him casually, being polite but somewhat distant.
Zhou Mingrui frowned slightly, not turning back to look again, and left the Administrative Department directly.
Something feels a bit off... He had just grumbled inwardly when he saw Luo Shan walking over with a pancake and a cup of five-grain soy milk.
"Good morning," Luo Shan greeted cheerfully.
"Good morning," Zhou Mingrui smiled, "I just went to find you, but you hadn't arrived yet. Luo Fu said you were held up by something."
Luo Shan looked around. "Want to ask me about something again?"
The two chatted casually for a few sentences, each walking towards their own department's office.
Suddenly, Zhou Mingrui's phone vibrated.
He took it out to look, and it was a message from Luo Shan, who he had just been chatting with: "Don't talk to Luo Fu about anything today, wait until tomorrow."
The moment he saw this message, Zhou Mingrui thought the two girls' relationship had suddenly broken down, and they were trying to isolate each other by forming cliques. But after reading it carefully again, he came to a preliminary conclusion.
Does Luo Shan mean that today's Luo Fu has a problem, don't contact her, and it will be fine tomorrow?
Why would there be a problem? She was still normal yesterday...
Is it because of our chat last night about the vending machine, the Assassin drink, and subsequent troubles? This seems a bit like, a bit like when The Star in the group suddenly went offline when mentioning key things...
What kind of problem could it be, who gave the problem, and why is it there today but solved tomorrow?
One question after another flashed through Zhou Mingrui's mind, but he couldn't find reasonable explanations for many of them.
...
13th floor, Security Department.
Lumian and his partner Old Xia had patrolled all floors once, finding no security risks.
After sitting in a room that looked more like a rest area for security guards than an office, Lumian took out his phone.
Since Franca had already left the dreamscape, she could meet with the Major Arcana card holders, so he no longer needed to pass

yesterday's experimental results, along with the matter of the associate dean of Musha Hospital being suspected to be the matriarch of the Church of Earth Mother, Roland, through the Star Dream Provisions Store.
Most of the results of this experiment were within his expectations, with the only pleasant surprise being: Luo Shan's memories were still there, all the memories of interacting with Franca and Jenna were still intact!
This means we can 'cultivate' dream characters... but we're not sure to what extent understanding the truth will bring anomalies to dream characters...
In the future, there might be a situation where: all five of us, and even subsequent coin holders, are completely kicked out of the dream, only able to observe, yet there are quite a few dream characters who have inherited our will and cause, still striving to awaken Mr. Fool, and they are part of the dream, unable to be kicked out!
This is a change in thinking, it doesn't have to be outsiders, it doesn't have to be us, NPCs can also play a role...
At that time, well, these dream characters won't be kicked out, but they can be killed or corrupted, just like the Oracle.
When enough dream characters are killed, isn't that also a kind of stimulation for Mr. Fool? This also counts as a disaster for the dream city, with a large number of important characters dying or falling...
Demonesses and Hunters—are they really meant to bring calamity?
Lumian mocked himself, then selected "Intis Group Grimm" and opened the chat interface.
He slightly raised his chin, with a rather cold expression, using voice input to send a message: "How are you doing with the recent matters?"
Sitting in another chair two or three meters away, Old Xia heard this voice and these words, and suddenly shuddered, feeling that this kid Li Ming somehow seemed more like a team leader than Team Lead Xu.
After a few minutes, Grimm replied: "Haven't found a way to make Huang Tao return to the Mother's embrace yet.
"Without Huang Tao's cooperation and acquiescence, there are many things we can't do now. Currently, we can only use the authority of the Security Department to monitor Zhou Mingrui's actions. We've installed pinhole cameras and bugs at his seat, and planted a trojan on his computer. This allows us to discover problems immediately from his browsing history, search history,

and call records, and prevent them in time.
"A few days ago, Zhou Mingrui had thoughts of resigning and searched for specific procedures and precautions, but later he didn't do it and hasn't looked at articles or videos on this aspect again.
"Without Huang Tao's cooperation, we can't keep him through promotion and salary increase for now. We must solve this problem before he actually resigns."
Lumian read it carefully and felt that Grimm, or rather the children of the Great Mother in the dream city, hadn't thought about how to cooperate with the Celestial Worthy to turn Zhou Mingrui into a Witch for now. They were more focused on monitoring, observing, and trying to keep Zhou Mingrui staying within the Intis Group where they had great influence, not resigning and leaving.
It feels like what the children of the Great Mother are currently doing is maintaining balance and obtaining the latest intelligence changes at any time...
This basically matches the judgment of the Major Arcana cards and me regarding the intentions of the evil gods...
After muttering to himself for a couple of sentences, Lumian stood up and began pacing in the office.
He was thinking about how to use Grimm and other children of the mother, and also about the matter of Mr. Fool drinking the Assassin potion.
Frankly speaking, when he learned that the Celestial Worthy induced Mr. Fool to drink the Assassin potion, attempting to make him gradually become a Witch, change gender, and thus cause cognitive issues, Lumian felt it was a bit absurd.
In his view, gods were all divine, and except for a few pathways that needed to emphasize gender, they shouldn't care whether they were male or female. Those ancient beings who had lived for thousands or tens of thousands of years might be even more so.
Would Mr. Fool really have cognitive issues because of becoming female?
Recalling that Mr. Fool required to be referred to as "he" rather than "He," Lumian reluctantly accepted this reason.
At the same time, he also suspected that the Celestial Worthy wanted to use the conflict of symbolically non-neighboring pathway Beyonder characteristics to drive Mr. Fool mad, thus gaining the upper hand and achieving victory—the Demoness pathway was not adjacent to the Seer, Apprentice, or Marauder pathways.
After killing the reanimated female corpse Panatiya and learning

about her mission, Lumian's internal balance leaned more towards the speculation that the Celestial Worthy wanted to use the conflict between non-neighboring pathways.
Panatiya was supposed to make Zhou Mingrui fall in love, and after he drank the Witch potion and changed gender, stay by his side. Wasn't this equivalent to helping Zhou Mingrui, helping Mr. Fool stabilize his mental state?
This was somewhat contradictory to the speculation of using gender change to cause cognitive issues for Mr. Fool.
And if stabilizing the mental state was for Zhou Mingrui to drink higher sequence Demoness potions, accumulating more madness, it seemed more reasonable.
Now, following this line of thought, Lumian had new questions: Why did it have to be the Assassin potion, the Demoness pathway?
As long as it was a potion from a pathway not adjacent to Seer, Apprentice, or Marauder, it could achieve the purpose...
Does becoming female early on indeed have its effect, bringing mental hidden dangers?
Combining this with the fact that most of our team are Demonesses, and the Celestial Worthy specifically brought a Demoness marionette into the dream city, does this indicate that inducing Zhou Mingrui to drink the Assassin potion, rather than other non-neighboring potions, has hidden reasons?
Lumian immediately went through various specialties of the Demoness pathway in his mind.
In just a few seconds, he thought of a term: "Mirror Person"!
Becoming a Witch not only changes one into a female but also creates a corresponding, fixed Mirror Person.
From this Sequence onwards, Demonesses can use mirrors to create avatars and use corresponding magic.
And from Lumian's current experience, Mirror People were more extreme, more vicious, more sinister.
What the Celestial Worthy actually wants is to make Mr. Fool have a Mirror Person, and then by doing certain things to the Mirror Person, or making the Mirror Person do certain things, achieve the goal of winning this confrontation? Confusing the real with the fake, turning the fake into real? Lumian fell into deep thought.
At this moment, his phone vibrated, and the new incoming message was from Anderson Hood.

Chapter 957: A Special Ability Once Obtained

"A name that leaves a deep impression on you" sent a "Hi" emoji: "Want another round of fun?"
"Hope it's more exciting than last night," Lumian replied using voice input, bringing the phone close to his mouth.
Nearby, Old Xia glanced at him, his eyes full of envy and longing.
Young people sure have exciting lives...
No wonder he has a 7-year-old child at just 22...
Too bad I don't dare...
Soon, Anderson replied to Lumian: "You pick the place, somewhere suitable for discussing secrets."
"Alright," Lumian didn't refuse.
"Let's set the time for 6 p.m., I like sunlight." Anderson sent an "OK" emoji.
After Lumian replied "No problem," the former strongest Hunter of the Fog Sea asked in text: "Why is your WeChat name 'The Idiot', do you think you're not smart enough?"
Lumian chuckled. "I really like tarot cards, and I think The Fool card is super cool. Calling myself 'Idiot' is a kind of an imitation."
"Sometimes, people like to use high-sounding reasons to cover up their own issues. This is a phrase I've been fond of lately, and I'll share it with you too." Anderson replied, sending a "Bye-bye" emoji.
Lumian didn't respond further.
After resting for a while, he and Old Xia started patrolling the floors again.
When they reached the 10th floor, while patrolling inside the Intis Group, Lumian saw Zhou Mingrui coming out of the public restroom.
As their eyes met, Lumian nodded slightly, as a greeting.
Zhou Mingrui hadn't run into him these past couple of days, and since security guards patrolling the floors was indeed routine work, he didn't show any alertness and responded with a nod.
As they passed each other, Lumian naturally checked the surroundings for any fire hazards.
He hadn't thought about using this opportunity to hint at the existence of Beyonder powers to Zhou Mingrui during the day. Firstly, they weren't close enough to chat, and even if he tried hinting, the other party might not be willing to listen. Secondly, he needed to wait until Franca being kicked out of the dreamscape truly ended, otherwise it would be impossible to distinguish whether subsequent anomalies were aftereffects of last night's reminder or caused by today's probing.
Seeing that Li Ming, this security guard, didn't make any strange

gestures or say anything odd, Zhou Mingrui's doubts dissipated a bit more.

...

At 6 p.m., sunlight still illuminated the small square in front of the mall, lighting up those facilities for children to play.

Inside a glass-sealed cylinder, six sets of seats were slowly rotating.

In the middle of the cylinder, various colored plastic balls were constantly being sprayed out, flying in all directions. Ludwig was using a fishing net with a handle to catch them.

Lumian sat next to him, like a real parent, and the adjacent set of seats belonged to Anderson.

Anderson didn't have children, but he sat there at ease, occasionally raising his net to catch a ball, completely without the shame or embarrassment of an adult who had entered a children's ball pit without bringing a child.

At this time, except for the three of them, no one else was present; everyone else had gone home for dinner.

"It's very enclosed here, no one will disturb or eavesdrop, and I've checked the facility, there's no problem," Lumian said to Anderson with a smile. "I originally wanted to choose the carousel, but it's not private enough, not suitable for discussing secrets."

As they spoke, they followed the seats, constantly rotating around the middle of the cylinder.

"This effectively makes up for the childhood I lost." Anderson glanced at Ludwig, then turned to Lumian and said, "Do you sometimes feel that this world is unreal, that many people are like puppets in a theater, seeming normal at first glance, but some details make you fearful?"

"Why are you talking about this kind of thing with me and my girlfriend?" Lumian countered without answering.

The girlfriend referred to Jenna.

Anderson smiled and said meaningfully, "Because I feel that you are very real, more real than the people around us."

Lumian also smiled. "Yes, I sometimes feel that this world is unreal; it's like a huge dream. We seem to be making our own choices, but in fact, we are being pushed and guided by the subconscious of the dream owner. When he wakes up, everything will disappear like bubbles."

Amidst the music of spraying balls, the smile on Anderson's face became more evident.

"There's a time limit for this attraction, we can't stay here forever.

"Have you ever heard of the term 'Battle of the Gods Ruins'?"

Is this confirming each other's identity? Lumian glanced outside

the glass cylinder and smiled as he answered Anderson's question, "I've heard of it."
Outside the door of this children's facility, Anthony was waiting there holding Lumian and Anderson's phones.
Anderson smiled and sighed. "It's indeed easier to communicate with you than with a certain someone.
"Some people, their brains might be spouting from their boxing gloves."
Anderson continued, "I've adventured the Battle of the Gods Ruins, come into contact with some dangerous things, which caused me to undergo some changes.
"In sufficiently special dreams, if I receive a strong enough stimulus, I can break free from the dreaming state and maintain a certain level of clarity within the dream."
Is this the reason you discovered the dream city isn't real? Lumian didn't ask Anderson this, but remained quiet.
He still wasn't clear about the exact relationship between the Colorful Hostel and Anderson.
Anderson smiled and said, "That adventure was very exciting, but unfortunately, I can't write it out in certain books; after all, I'm not the protagonist.
"In recent years, I often dream of living in a big city like this, which makes me look forward to sleeping.
"In that dream, sometimes I'm a language teacher, sometimes I'm an unsuccessful painter. They should be the same person, just in different states of life.
"Later, the painter became mute, and his painting skills underwent a qualitative change.
"I was stimulated, woke up in the dream, and gained a certain level of clarity.
"I found that someone was actually giving me money, helping me open an art studio, and even a hotel. Oh, the evil of knowledge, do such good things exist? Of course I had to accept, how could I let down their kindness?"
In other words, Anderson's dream manifestation was corrupted for some reason and became a real Painter, which also stimulated the real Anderson, allowing his consciousness to enter the dream using his own special ability? So, this Anderson dream manifestation split, sometimes he's the cram school teacher Anderson—formerly the strongest Hunter of the Fog Sea. And sometimes he's the mute painter Anderson. The cram school teacher Anderson contacted us because he discovered we're also outsiders? Lumian nodded with some understanding.
This was actually similar to Luo Shan's state, except that the real

Rozanne didn't have any special dream abilities, so she couldn't come in person to fight against the power of boons and the corruption of evil gods.
"How was it, my story was pretty exciting, right? Give me a review," Anderson suddenly changed the subject.
Lumian applauded. "What about the sequel to the story? If the real Anderson doesn't actively enter the dream, the mute Anderson in the dream shouldn't affect him."
Anderson shrugged and said with a smile, "Can you be 100% certain it won't have an effect?"
"No," Lumian answered honestly.
Anderson nodded with a look of caring for an uneducated youngling. "Moreover, that dream is interesting and fun. As humans, we need to frequently change our forms of entertainment.
"I told Danitz in the dream to be careful of me turning into a mute at night, but unfortunately, he didn't understand my hint. If I could get some things and disguise myself as Edwina, he would probably be more proactive in using his brain to ponder what I said."
"You painted the mute painter in the painting? You also possess the painting skills that were qualitatively changed?" Lumian asked about last night's events.
Luo Shan also painted another self, and after Franca helped burn it, her condition improved significantly...
Is Anderson using me to "adjust" his own state?
Anderson clicked his tongue and said, "Don't you use the same body during the day and at night?
"The changes in the body are common."
Lumian pondered and asked, "In the dreamscape, the Painter shouldn't be able to make what he paints truly come off the paper, there are too many obstacles."
All abilities should be suppressed to Sequence 7 level, but yesterday's Anderson could freely move around the residential district and could still speak before entering the studio.
Anderson smiled and said, "Dreamscapes always have some special cases and exceptions. If the dream owner symbolizes loopholes, then his dream will inevitably have some loopholes. This is a manifestation of part of his symbolism in the dream, unless he consciously controls it, it can't be avoided.
"The mute Anderson originally didn't exist, he's just another state of mine, but he's also hidden in the dream owner's thoughts and cognition. So once I paint him, he doesn't need to invade from the outside to become real, but he can't leave the studio and is very

weak."
Mr. Fool's manifestation once knew a mute Anderson, or imagined Anderson becoming mute? Lumian nodded slightly and asked, "So the one who led me into the studio was you yourself?"
Anderson smiled obviously and said, "Of course, after I entered the studio, while you were looking at those oil paintings, I left through a pre-prepared painting and activated the mute Anderson painting.
"That's my studio, equivalent to a Hunter's home ground, there would definitely be additional arrangements.
"I changed my clothes and pants afterwards, so you didn't recognize me?"
"Why did you change your clothes and pants?" Lumian probed.
Anderson smiled again. "Just kidding."
Is this Anderson's style... Do all successful Hunters have a tendency for pranks? Lumian accepted Anderson's explanation. If it were him, he might do the same thing.
Anderson glanced at the entertainment facility that was almost out of time.
"Now it's my turn to ask, right?
"What do you want to do by coming here?"
This didn't seem like a question, more like a confirmation.
"To wake up the dream owner in the best and most humane state," Lumian answered simply.
Anderson suddenly smiled. "A few days ago, a foreigner came to the cram school to visit. He was as real as you guys."
"What's his name?" Lumian asked, outwardly calm.
At this moment, the balls stopped spraying, and the rotation of the seats quickly slowed down until it stopped.
Anderson stood up and said with a smile, "Zaratulstra."

Chapter 958: Inside and Outside the Dream

It's that Zaratulstra again... Did he go to the Dream Tutoring Classes to wait for Zhou Mingrui, or did he have another purpose?
Lumian held Ludwig's hand as they walked out of the seating area. While waiting for the staff to open the door of the amusement facility, he smiled at Anderson and asked, "Did you chat with him?"
Anderson put his hands in his pockets and smiled. "He said he wanted to deeply influence one person and eliminate some people."
Is the one he wants to deeply influence Zhou Mingrui? And who are the ones he wants to eliminate? Why did Zaratulstra talk about this with Anderson? Was one of his purposes for going to the Dream Tutoring Classes to find Anderson, to find the mute Anderson representing the Fantasy Association? Does this symbolize the cooperation between the Celestial Worthy and that evil god of the Fantasy Association? Lumian walked towards the now-open door, casually saying, "People like Danitz?"
What he wanted to ask was whether the people Zaratulstra wanted to eliminate were dream characters like Oracle Danitz, or outsiders like himself.
Anderson gave a thumbs up, walking down the few steps at the entrance. "At the time, I couldn't understand why they dealt with Danitz first. *What role could he play?* Maybe he was just lucky, and they had to first finish off the lucky one."
In a situation where everyone is suppressed to Sequence 7, luck is indeed very important... From Anderson's words, was the death of the Oracle done by Zaratulstra and the mute Anderson together? The mute Anderson's involvement means he himself was also involved, with a chance to secretly sabotage and influence the progress of things. So, is that why we discovered the Oracle's body earlier, instead of it being sent to the morgue at Mushu Hospital according to the planned schedule, to "resurrect" and return? Lumian nodded thoughtfully.
He felt that Anderson had used the mute dream manifestation to interfere with Zaratulstra's actions, resulting in the other party only achieving the goal of eliminating Danitz, without successfully utilizing the Oracle's body.
Lumian was now unsure whether Zaratulstra was more Zaratul or more Loki, so he directly used the dream name to refer to him.
Damn, it was you, Anderson, who did it. No wonder you called the police immediately... This also explains why we stumbled upon the death of the Oracle. It wasn't a coincidence... Lumian cursed

inwardly for a couple of sentences, passing by Anthony without retrieving his phone. Anderson did the same.
Taking advantage of the few people playing in the small square, he looked at the displayed on the mall's big screen and asked a question one would typically ask during a stroll.
"What do you want to do by opening the Colorful Hostel?"
"As soon as you come in, someone hands you a sum of money, hands you a hotel that's still under renovation, would you refuse? When faced with sugar-coated bullets, isn't it a normal choice to eat the sugar coating and throw back the bullet?" Anderson smiled and asked in return.
"But many times, the sugar coating can also be poisonous, or you might not have time to throw back the bullet. You wouldn't want it if someone forcibly put a child in your belly, would you?" The temporary Child of God of the Great Mother, Lumian, spoke from experience.
Anderson was stunned for a second, then smiled and said, "If it's really put in, you have to keep it even if you don't want to. If you can't get rid of it later, you can only cultivate a good father-son or father-daughter relationship."
Lumian changed the question. "What does the behind-the-scenes hand that made those people give you money and the hotel want to do?"
Anderson turned his head to look at him and said with a smile, "Isn't that why I've come to find you?"
Lumian's thoughts raced, vaguely understanding the meaning in Anderson's words: one of the goals of that evil god of the Fantasy Association was to hinder the Celestial Worthy and maintain the balance of the dream. It was precisely because Anderson grasped this key point that he actively contacted Lumian and others, speaking so plainly.
Anderson looked ahead again, walking towards the food gathering area behind the mall.
"I saw a funny saying online before.
"The saying goes, 'I'm afraid of my brother suffering, but I also don't want my brother owning a Range Rover.'"
"That's interesting." Lumian felt Anderson didn't need to hint so obviously, he could understand completely.
Anderson continued, "A hotel always has guests, coming from different places."
At this point, he suddenly pointed at the spray painting on a shop sign.
"Paintings are complex. They are both information and a door to a fantasy realm. If a complete and real order can be established in

the world within the painting, wouldn't it become an almost real world?"
Is this hinting at something? Hinting at the possible goals of that evil god of the Fantasy Association? Lumian lacked key information and could only roughly understand what Anderson was saying, unable to figure out the true meaning of these words.
Based on the knowledge he currently possessed, he felt that the evil god of the Fantasy Association also wanted to occupy more pathways, just like the Great Mother and the Mother Tree of Desire. What He had His eye on were the Mystery Pryer and Savant pathways that symbolize information, the Apprentice pathway that represented the concept of "door", alternate worlds, and space itself, as well as the Lawyer and Arbiter pathways that could give the world within paintings a real order.
While Lumian was thinking, Anderson pointed at a shop and laughed. "I told you the world would have loopholes, look over there."
Lumian looked over and found it was a small shop named "Loen Delights", mainly selling sweet iced tea and Desi pies.
"How could Loen have anything considered a delight? This is definitely a loophole," Anderson said with a mocking expression.
Lumian nodded. "Yes."
On this matter, the two Intisians easily reached a consensus.
And Ludwig started to clamor.
"I want to eat!"
...
In an apartment on Rue du Chapeau Noir in Quartier de la Maison d'Opéra.
Witch Niceea sat in front of her dressing mirror, carefully and meticulously drawing her eyebrows and applying powder in the light of the gas wall lamp.
Suddenly, behind her, near the chair by the window, a figure appeared.
It was Franca, in a relaxed posture.
Franca quietly watched Niceea without making a sound.
After discussing with Madam Magician and Madam Judgment about why she was kicked out of the dream and the issue with the associate dean of Mushu Hospital, she rested for a day. Before returning to the dream, she specifically came to see her subordinate to ask about her recent progress.
She couldn't be the kind of superior who disappeared completely after arranging a task, showing no concern and effectively going missing!
After about ten seconds, Niceea finally noticed and subtly adjusted

the direction of her dressing mirror.
Seeing it was her immediate superior, she quietly sighed in relief and turned around.
"Good evening, ma'am."
"Good evening, how have you been lately?" Franca didn't directly ask about the Emperor Party.
She hadn't contacted 007 yet, because 007 was recently undergoing special training, seemingly with hope of obtaining a spot to become a demigod.
Niceea's expression changed several times, showing some struggle and pain, and with a bit of a "might as well" attitude, she said, "I've become Grouès's mistress."
Grouès was one of the confidants of Louis Gustav, the leader of the Emperor Party.
This progress is a bit fast; you haven't been a Witch for long, haven't you... Franca didn't ask about Niceea's current feelings, and asked calmly, "Did Grouès say anything?"
Seeing that her superior didn't inquire about her journey and actual experience of becoming a mistress, Niceea's inner conflict, embarrassment, and irritation subsided considerably.
She recalled and said, "He said Louis has been troubled lately, seeming very irritable. The reason seems to be that he can't contact some important figure."
"Which important figure?" Franca asked.
"Grouès doesn't know either, only that there is such an important figure, an important figure that gives Louis a lot of confidence." Niceea shook her head.
Unable to contact the mirrored Emperor Roselle? Franca suddenly had such a thought.
She nodded slightly.
"Find a way to figure out who that important figure is, and grasp the substantial movements of the Emperor Party."
After saying this, her figure quickly faded and disappeared from the chair.
Niceea quietly watched the lady leave, raised her right hand, and slowly caressed from her cheek to her lips.
Franca directly returned to that luxurious villa, without going to report to the Demoness of Black that she had fully digested the Affliction potion.
Let alone whether the Demoness Sect would reward her with the Despair potion in a situation where she hadn't made new achievements, even if they would, she couldn't possibly really perform the ritual, so it was better to stall for now.
After dinner, close to midnight, Franca stood up and walked

towards her room.
The slightly short Madam Judgment escorted her to the room while instructing, "For the second return to the dream, operating under the previous identity, the current experience is that there won't be much difference from the first time. But by the third time, we've found that some attempts that wouldn't have gotten us kicked out of the dream before will also result in being kicked out, as if we've been simply marked by that Celestial Worthy.
"So, you need to pay attention now to whether there are subtle changes compared to last time, to determine whether becoming an object of attention starts from the second entry into the dream or the third. Also, don't make any radical probes in the next few days, you've just been kicked out and need to wait a while."
"Mm, I'll be careful." Franca remembered that this had been mentioned in the documents.
After going upstairs and reaching the door, Madam Judgment further said,
"We can't give you many things to take into the dream, because we've used them in the dream and they've also been marked.
"If you want to make money, there's another way: have one person apply for a job at the Hall Film Company, a subsidiary of the Hall Group. Although Miss Justice can't enter the dream anymore, as a Dreamweaver and Major Arcana card holder, she can still exert a little influence on the dream."
"Understood," Franca responded with a smile, "Thank you all."
She then entered the room, lay down on the bed again, and gripped the lucky coin in her palm.
She had tried yesterday, if she didn't put the lucky coin beside her, she would just fall asleep normally and dream normally, occasionally flashing fragments of the dream city, like sights and sounds from "Luo Fu".
Franca closed her eyes and regulated her breathing.

Chapter 959: Weekend

Dechuang Garden, Room 2303.

Jenna accompanied "Luo Fu" as they watched TV in the living room, occasionally scrolling through her phone. The two conversed very little.

Suddenly, she noticed "Luo Fu" turn her body and say with bright eyes, "I'm back again!"

Jenna didn't respond immediately, because "Luo Fu" and Franca had very similar personalities.

Franca then picked up her phone and said to Jenna, "Quick, quick, send me another copy of the Information Shredder."

Hearing "Information Shredder", Jenna finally confirmed that it was really Franca who had returned.

At this moment, Franca unlocked her screen and found that WeChat had already been redownloaded by "Luo Fu", and Jenna, Luo Shan, and several employees from the administrative department had been re-added, but not "The Idiot", "An Ruide", or "Li Lu".

After a quick glance, Franca hurriedly tapped into her WeChat wallet.

Her expression suddenly froze. "The money, my money... it's gone!"

Jenna's pupils dilated as she quickly leaned over, discovering that Franca's WeChat wallet balance was "0.00 yuan".

"It didn't delete all the information on my phone, including the money in my online wallet, did it?" Franca hurriedly downloaded a banking app again, taking some time to complete the login and check her balance.

She let out a long sigh of relief, patting her chest.

"Thank goodness, the bulk of it is still there. That gave me such a fright."

After her exclamation, she explained to Jenna,

"The money in my bank account is still there!"

Jenna glanced at her bank card balance and asked thoughtfully, "How much money did you originally have in your WeChat wallet?"

"138 yuan," Franca answered smoothly. "I had over 300 yuan in Alipay too."

The Alipay app had already been downloaded back by "Luo Fu". She tapped in to check and found there was still over 100 yuan.

"Uh..." Franca flipped through the transactions and finally confirmed that this 100+ yuan was later transferred from the bank card by "Luo Fu", with some spent on takeout orders. The previous 300+ yuan had indeed vanished into thin air.

Jenna amusingly pressed her hand to her chest and said, "You only

lost about 500 yuan, but you acted like you lost all 120,000+. You scared me to death."
The 60,000 earned from selling items was currently with Jenna, and she had transferred half to Lumian and Anthony.
"Don't say such unlucky things. 500 yuan is a lot, it's enough for us to buy so many things at the wholesale market!" Franca thought for a moment and said, "I need to transfer some to Lumian and Anthony. We should each keep some separately, in case it all gets exposed at once. I've realized that this is like a game—when you get kicked out of the dream, you might drop equipment and money, and you might not even be able to pick it back up. Mm, we shouldn't put all our eggs in one basket."
"The money in the bank card is still there, but what was on the phone is gone?" Jenna pondered and said, "Because at that time you only cleared the phone information with one click, not the bank card information? The loss of money should be an issue with the Information Shredder, right?"
Franca nodded slowly. "This mini-program is really powerful. I suspect it even deleted the corresponding information and backup information on the servers. Only in this way could it deal with mystical photos and prevent our chat records from being found..."
At this point, Franca frowned slightly and said, "I asked Madam Magician and Madam Judgment. They know every high-ranking member of the Church of Steam, but none of them is called Stiano."
"Anthony's feeling at that time must have been correct. Stiano should have a close connection with the Church of Steam." Jenna also showed a puzzled expression.
"They seem to have suspects. They said they would tell us through the Star Dream Provisions Store after confirmation," Franca suddenly looked around, pointed at the ceiling, and said in a lowered voice, "Could it be that one? Only a mini-program made by Him could be so powerful, and besides, He can enter with real consciousness."
"Maybe..." Jenna's voice also became low.
As a native of Trier, she had received religious education since childhood and still had considerable awe for deities.
She now wondered if she would one day encounter the Eternal Blazing Sun she once believed in within this dream city.
And if the Eternal Blazing Sun entered, what would the corresponding dream manifestation look like?
In the brief silence, Franca re-added Lumian and the others, completing the distribution of assets—she and Jenna kept 90,000, while Lumian and Anthony got 90,000.

Then, she and Jenna exchanged their feelings about her being kicked out of the dream and the details they discovered after she returned to reality.
She didn't edit all of this into a message to send to Lumian, planning to find an opportunity to meet face-to-face tomorrow to talk in person.
This was out of concern that sensitive information might bring about anomalies if sent out and not deleted with the Information Shredder in time.
Madam Judgment had said to behave and be careful for these few days!
Chatting until almost 1 a.m., Franca stretched. "Fortunately, Luo Fu didn't spend money recklessly, otherwise I'd be heartbroken.
"Alright, let's wash up and go to sleep. We still need to get up early for work tomorrow. Oh, you can check if Hall Film Company is hiring recently and apply. It matches your profession!"
The corners of Jenna's mouth turned up in a smile. "Have you forgotten that tomorrow is Sunday?"
"Oh, right." Franca was stunned for a moment. "Going back and forth between the dream and reality has confused me. Originally, Luo Fu should have the day off today, but because the group had important matters with VIPs, she worked an extra day... Well, tomorrow I have to take Ludwig to tutoring class again."
...
At Xinhong District, in a rented apartment.
Lumian wasn't supervising Ludwig's studies. After receiving Franca's gift and deleting the transfer information, he continued using his phone to search for keywords like "Intis Group" and "VIP".
"What are you looking up? Do you need help?" Anthony asked from the side of the table.
"Not for now," Lumian answered without raising his head. "I'm collecting information related to Zaratulstra, but I can't directly search using that name."
Without waiting for Anthony to ask further, he added on his own,
"I want to know which hotel Zaratulstra is staying at and what his recent itinerary is."
"You're planning to..." Anthony keenly grasped Lumian's intention.
Lumian raised his head, revealing a bright smile.
"Yes, to take him out.
"There's no reason for us to always passively respond to and dismantle the moves of the Celestial Worthy's subordinates. We can also be more proactive—infiltrate, assassinate, eliminate, make the hidden dangers disappear before they emerge.
"Now that we're all at Sequence 7, it's not impossible for us to win.

And from our battle with the reanimated female corpse, we know that as long as we don't let the enemy escape, aren't recorded by surveillance, and there are no witnesses, the Celestial Worthy can't locate us."
Anthony nodded, indicating that Lumian's line of thinking was not wrong.
He just warned, "Even if suppressed to Sequence 7, that individual's essence is still that of an Angel. He's bound to have some mysterious, special, and bizarre abilities, and he's also skilled at using substitutes. He won't be easy to kill. Moreover, there might be other subordinates of the Celestial Worthy around him."
"I know," Lumian nodded with a smile. "Even if only left with Sequence 7 strength, some of Zaratulstra's Beyonder powers will still be very bizarre and terrifying. We need to consider this before taking action."
After collecting intelligence on Zaratulstra for a while, Lumian used the Information Shredder to delete the search records and used pen, paper, and his brain to organize the information.
After repeatedly reviewing the compiled data for a long time, he planned to find an opportunity to scout the location after accompanying Ludwig to tutoring class tomorrow.
For the rest of the time, he took out the new ice board he had made and, for the umpteenth time, scrutinized the information on each dream character and the preliminary findings from their team's observations and interactions with these characters.
...
The next day, at Dream Tutoring Classes.
Lumian escorted the slowly moving Ludwig to the door of the Beginner English class.
Anderson glanced at him and greeted, "Want to join for some enlightenment?"
"No need, I'd rather learn painting," Lumian replied simply, pushing Ludwig towards Anderson.
Anderson didn't speak to him further, taking Ludwig's hand and walking back into the classroom.
Lumian sat down opposite, patiently waiting just like last time.
Before long, he saw Zhou Mingrui again.
Zhou Mingrui was wearing a white T-shirt with patterns, looking much more youthful and sunny than when he was at work.
Zhou Mingrui wasn't surprised at all to see him here, as if he had been mentally prepared. He nodded slightly as a greeting.
Lumian didn't engage in small talk, only politely responding.
More contact, less closeness, to lower the target's vigilance!
Moreover, Franca's probing last night had quite good results,

successfully making Zhou Mingrui wary of the aftermath of the Assassin beverage. Now he needed to give him some time to digest such bombshell news.
From this perspective, Franca being kicked out of the dream this time was worth it.
After watching Zhou Mingrui turn into the classroom, Lumian withdrew his gaze and started using his phone.
At this moment, he suddenly had a premonition and raised his head, looking towards the front desk of the tutoring center.
He saw Principal Ai Nana, wearing a white long dress, accompanying an elderly man inside.
Behind them were several employees of Dream Tutoring Classes and unfamiliar faces Lumian hadn't seen before.
Lumian's gaze fell on the elderly man, noticing he was wearing a black formal suit, his hair completely white, with long and dense white whiskers on his face, and blue eyes so deep they were almost without light.
Lumian's eyes narrowed slightly. He had seen a portrait of this elderly man before: Zaratulstra!
He's come to Dream Tutoring Classes again? Lumian quietly stood up, retreating along with other parents to avoid this group of people.
Ai Nana led Zaratulstra to stop at the door of the Business English class, introducing the relevant situation.
Zaratulstra's gaze subsequently turned towards those students.
At this point, Lumian had already retreated to the depths of the corridor, stopping next to the fire alarm, and glanced up at the surveillance camera that could capture this area.
He watched Zaratulstra from the corner of his eye. If the other party made any unusual movements or tried to talk to Zhou Mingrui, he would first knock out the surveillance camera from a blind spot, then punch the fire alarm to make the scene chaotic, causing everyone to rush out of Dream Tutoring Classes.
During this process, he would play the role of a panicked parent, constantly obstructing Zaratulstra's various actions while carrying Ludwig.

Chapter 960: Psychiatric Ward

Using the cover of the parents in front, Lumian discreetly observed Zaratulstra's every move.

After listening to Ai Nana's introduction for a few minutes, Zaratulstra nodded, left the door of the Business English class, and turned to look at the other training classes currently in session.

He didn't do anything... Lumian was puzzled, but remained vigilant.

It wasn't until Zaratulstra finished touring Dream Tutoring Classes and Ai Nana escorted him and his entourage out, returning to teach the Business English class, that Lumian sat back in his original seat and silently said to himself, He's leaving just like that?

Was he simply here to recognize Zhou Mingrui, complete the initial contact, or did he secretly do something that I didn't notice? For example, has he already controlled Ms. Ai, or discreetly used some ability to achieve his predetermined goal from just a few meters away?

After thinking it through, Lumian picked up his phone and sent a message to Jenna: "Ask Luo Shan to remind the target via WeChat to pay attention to his condition today, not to drink water he brought to the tutoring class, and to buy new water later."

This was to indirectly and subtly remind Zhou Mingrui, and at the same time, it was an experiment to see if hints conveyed through dream characters during the day would bring any anomalies to themselves.

A few minutes later, Zhou Mingrui, who was listening attentively to the lecture, felt his phone vibrate in his pocket.

He took out his phone, lowered his head, unlocked the screen, and saw a message from Luo Shan: "Remember to examine yourself three times a day, and don't drink water you've brought outside."

What does this mean? I can't make head or tail of the message. It's puzzling... Zhou Mingrui first grumbled to himself, then perceived the hidden reminder.

He hadn't yet fully determined whether Luo Shan was good or bad, whether she had more good intentions or bad intentions towards him, but the hint to frequently examine his own condition and not drink the current water wouldn't cause any harm even if he followed it.

In such matters, it's better to believe something existed than to doubt its existence!

Zhou Mingrui replied with an "Okay" and stuffed the phone back into his pocket, raising his head again.

He didn't look at the bottle of mineral water he had placed on the table again.
Outside the classroom, Lumian once again scrutinized Zaratulstra's recent behavior.
He just looked at Zhou Mingrui from a few meters away for a while, without trying to get closer...
Whether or not he did anything secretly, this behavior makes me feel that he doesn't dare to deeply engage with Zhou Mingrui, to do some things in front of that person...
Combined with Franca's morning description of the feeling of being kicked out of the dream and the overt and covert struggles in the lottery incident, it can be seen that Mr. Fool has a certain control over the dream, at least not much weaker than the Celestial Worthy. In this situation, if Zaratulstra stimulates him and his identity is discovered or locked onto, he is likely to be made into a marionette or kicked out of the dream...
In the dream city, it's not just us who need to be careful, the Celestial Worthy's subordinates also have to follow the same rules...
Thinking of this, Lumian's train of thought became much clearer.
He stood up and began pacing in the corridor, thinking about the details of some issues while waiting for the possible consequences of indirectly reminding Zhou Mingrui.
Walking to the end of the passageway, he casually glanced outside through the window.
He suddenly saw that across the street, Zaratulstra walked out of the building accompanied by a young girl, followed by his entourage and many unfamiliar faces.
Lumian was very familiar with the appearance of that young girl.
The Major Arcana card holder, The Hermit, Queen of Stars Cattleya!
In the dream city, Ma'am Hermit's role is Huang Jiajia, roommate of Miss Bernie Huang, and because she lost a bet, she always calls Bernie Huang 'dad'... Mr. Fool's subconscious weaving of relationships is quite interesting...
Huang Jiajia's family runs Star Tutoring Classes, which is a competitor to Dream Tutoring Classes, so she used high remuneration to ask Zhou Mingrui to enroll in Dream Tutoring Classes to scout the enemy...
Is Zaratulstra putting on a full show by examining Dream Tutoring Classes' competitors as well, or does he want to do something to Ma'am Hermit's dream manifestation?
Speaking of which, the dried mushrooms that prevented Zhou Mingrui from drinking the Instigator beverage came from Huang Jiajia, grown by the biology teacher Li Keji at Star Tutoring Classes,

whose prototype is the 'Legendary Druid' Frank Lee... No wonder those dried mushrooms had supernatural properties. In Mr. Fool's subconscious, any mushroom products sent by Frank Lee might be problematic...

Lumian stood at the window, watching until Zaratulstra got into a black business car, with Huang Jiajia and others waving goodbye at the roadside, before preparing to walk back to the outside of the Beginner English class.

Suddenly, he heard a wee-woo wee-woo sound.

It was an ambulance, stopping at the entrance of Star Tutoring Classes. Not only nurses but also police officers jumped out.

What happened? Was it brought by Zaratulstra? Lumian stopped in his tracks and continued observing from afar.

Before long, the police and nurses brought out a person from Star Tutoring Classes. The person was wearing a white shirt and olive green overalls, with longish brown hair and dense body hair. His hands were handcuffed behind his back, and his legs and body were tightly bound.

This person was carried out and stuffed into the ambulance.

Lumian recognized this person.

He was Li Keji, the biology teacher at Star Tutoring Classes, corresponding to the prototype character "Legendary Druid" Frank Lee!

Why was he arrested? And arrested using an ambulance...

Did he cause problems with the mushrooms?

Or is this the problem brought by Zaratulstra? Is he trying to eliminate Frank Lee's dream manifestation to prevent some mushroom from ruining his plans next time?

Lumian quickly took out his phone and scrolled through local news and videos.

In just a few minutes, he saw related posts: "Guys, can you believe it? I just went to take some biology tutoring, and the teacher was arrested as a mentally ill terrorist!

"Is studying biology so dangerous?

"The teacher had said earlier that if we did well on this test, he would give us a bag of new mushroom strains!"

After scrolling through several similar videos, Lumian roughly confirmed that Frank Lee had been arrested by the Celestial Worthy's side on some pretext, first to be treated for mental issues, then to deal with other matters.

However, judging from the description in the latest issue of The Great Adventurer and the situation with Zhou Mingrui's bag of dried mushrooms, the probability that the mushrooms grown at 'Li Keji's' home are harmless is very, very low. What's this called...

it seems to be endangering public safety by dangerous means? Arresting him seems reasonable... Just as Lumian thought of this, he received a message.
It was from "Intis Group Grimm": "There's a matter that requires your personal attention."
What matter requires the Child of God to handle personally? Lumian used voice input to reply: "Is it urgent?"
"Not too urgent." Grimm quickly replied.
Lumian pondered for a few seconds and replied: "Then wait until I've finished with the child."
In front of the Mother Goddess's believers, it was better to show more of the glory of motherhood, to make them more certain of one's identity.
"Alright, please attend to your matters first." Grimm replied quite humbly, completely unlike the security director of the Intis Group, while Lumian was just a mere security guard.
Lumian took this opportunity to inform Jenna about the Zaratulstra matter and Frank Lee's fate.
When the Business English class and Beginner English class ended one after another, Lumian politely said goodbye to Zhou Mingrui, took Ludwig, left Dream Tutoring Classes, and got into the gray sedan driven by Anthony.
Only then did he send a message to "Intis Group Grimm": "Time and place."
Just a dozen seconds later, Grimm responded: "I'll wait for you at the entrance of Mushu Hospital."
Mushu Hospital... Lumian frowned slightly.
...
Under the blazing sunlight, Lumian saw Grimm standing in the shade of a tree.
The security director of the Intis Group had changed into a light-colored striped shirt and was wearing sunglasses, disguising himself quite well.
"What's the matter?" Lumian walked past Grimm, heading straight into Mushu Hospital.
Grimm followed behind him to the side, saying with a smile in his voice, "You'll know when you see it. This should be one of the purposes Mother wanted you to come here for."
The way you're talking, it feels like you've dug a trap in front and are waiting for me to fall in... Lumian nodded slightly, not asking further.
Wouldn't asking too much reveal that there's actually no connection between me and the Great Mother?
Grimm quickened his pace, overtaking him, and led the way in

front.
He led Lumian around the main building to a three-story building behind it, surrounded by high walls, with a lawn and garden.
"This is the psychiatric ward," Grimm introduced, verifying his identity with the security guard and passing through the iron gate.
Lumian nodded thoughtfully.
The two quickly entered the building, and just as they climbed to the second floor under the nurse's guidance, they heard a patient banging on the iron door and shouting, "Let me out!
"I'm not sick! I only lost after fighting with two supreme beings to the edge of the universe, and you caught me, I'm not sick!
"This is my marionette, this is my paper figurine, look, I have them all with me, I'm not crazy!
"I've divined it, there's no danger, really no danger. That voice is normal, haven't you heard it?
"Let me out! Let me out!"
Lumian raised his right eyebrow.
Which Seer pathway Beyonder is this? At least a Marionettist...
Lumian immediately associated this with the Marionettist who hadn't intervened when they killed the reanimated female corpse, and thought of the madman found in the garbage dump near Moon Plazal the next morning, who had been sent to the hospital.
Is this the Marionettist who went mad? So he was sent to the psychiatric ward of Mushu Hospital... *What voice did he hear?* Did that cause him to go mad? As Lumian pondered, his footsteps didn't stop. He followed behind the nurse and Grimm all the way to the end of an empty corridor.
The nurse stood at the door of the deepest ward and said to Grimm and Lumian, "The patient is inside. You can look at him through the window, but don't reach your hands in."
After saying this, she turned and left, without providing any further warnings.
After watching the nurse disappear at the stairwell, Grimm smiled at Lumian and said,
"Child of God, Li Keji is inside."
Li Keji... Frank Lee? Although Lumian had already anticipated this, he was still shocked.

Chapter 961: Ideology

Lumian's expression remained unchanged as he looked at Grimm, waiting for him to continue speaking.

At this moment, the psychiatric ward was very quiet. There were no patients walking around, no family members coming and going, only the occasional nurse passing by.

Grimm glanced left and right before saying, "Child of God, this is an opportunity to impregnate Li Keji. Please do it personally."

Impregnate Frank Lee? I don't have that ability, I can only impregnate myself! Lumian grumbled inwardly, glancing at Grimm as he said, "You need me for such a small matter?"

Grimm smiled awkwardly. "If I do it, Li Keji would need to carry the child for a full 40 weeks before giving birth. That would take too long and couldn't be put to use in the short term. There may be some mutations soon."

So you really do have the Beyonder power to impregnate anyone regardless of gender. Corruption is also a kind of boon, and a source of power... But why are you so fixated on having Frank Lee give birth? Is it some kind of symbol, symbolizing that Frank Lee has truly become a child of the Mother? Various thoughts flashed through Lumian's mind.

He suddenly remembered that Frank Lee's dream manifestation, Li Keji, was a special character—influenced by Mr. Fool's subconscious perception, he exhibited supernatural aspects in mushroom-related matters. Moreover, judging from the dried mushroom incident, his potential stance leaned towards Mr. Fool.

If Frank Lee really became a child of the Great Mother, it would mean that the Great Mother's forces had control over this special point in the dream city, could effectively utilize it, and more deeply interfere with the development of the dream.

Although these evil gods like the Great Mother wanted balance more, Frank Lee falling into their hands was better than being controlled by the Celestial Worthy. But they also had to guard against the possibility that they were cooperating with the Celestial Worthy on this matter.

Frank Lee was arrested by official forces and brought to the psychiatric ward of Mushu Hospital, representing the will of the Celestial Worthy. The Great Mother was one of the "major shareholders" of Mushu Hospital. Perhaps the two have already reached an agreement to cooperate on this individual incident and completed a private transaction... Lumian calmly said to Grimm, "My power is also limited in this city, not much better than yours."

Grimm explained with a smile, "I know. This time we just want to

use your godhood. Although it's also restricted, it's still godhood.
"After you impregnate Li Keji, the hospital's obstetrics department will provide the corresponding reproductive technology and Beyonder power support. Li Keji can give birth to the child within four weeks."
As expected... The obstetrics department of Mushu Hospital is one of the symbols of the Great Mother in this dream... It sounds like it has already been corrupted to some extent, with multiple medical staff becoming children of the Mother...
If the obstetrics departments of every hospital in the dream city are thoroughly corrupted over time, and the problem isn't exposed, wouldn't that mean that all newborns in the dream city afterwards would be children of the Mother?
Generation after generation, everyone in the dream city would become a child of the Mother... In the end, whether it's Mr. Fool or that Celestial Worthy who wakes up, they would bear the identity of being a child of the Great Mother, in a mystical sense?
The more Lumian thought about it, the more inexplicably terrified he became.
This was a subtle, gradual influence, like boiling a frog in warm water. Given enough time, the Great Mother would inevitably achieve Her goal.
Of course, this was assuming that Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy didn't offer effective resistance, and that this dream continued for at least five generations, spanning a century.
These great existences are all cunning... After sighing inwardly, Lumian nodded slightly and responded to Grimm, "Okay."
Grimm's face lit up with joy as he said in a prayerful tone, "May the glory of motherhood be eternal!"
He then approached the iron gates of the ward and looked inside through the small window barred with iron. Lumian also took two steps forward.
What met their eyes was the burly back of a man wearing blue and white striped hospital clothes.
The figure was crouching in the corner, fiddling with something.
As Lumian's gaze moved, he noticed several mushrooms with brown caps and white stems growing where the wall met the floor. They looked fresh and plump, as if they had just been transplanted from a rain-soaked forest.
Bang! Lumian knocked on the iron door, and Grimm yielded the window position to him.
Hearing the knock, the figure stood up and dashed to the door, revealing a face with thick facial hair. It was indeed Li Keji, the biology teacher from Star Tutoring Classes, and the "Legendary

Druid" Frank Lee in reality.
Lumian could see that Mr. Fool's dream subconscious had localized the character of Li Keji to some extent, not setting him as a foreigner. Thus, his eyes were deep brown, and his facial features were softer.
"Finally, someone's here!" Li Keji said excitedly. "Go tell your dean and department head that I don't have mental problems. It's just that many people can't accept my ideas."
His eyes were pure and passionate.
I can only accept them to a limited extent... Lumian, who had read "The Great Adventurer 6: Future", muttered silently before asking seriously, "What are your ideas?"
Li Keji was eager to share. "For humans, the most important thing is food. There are still many people in this world suffering from hunger.
"To solve this problem, we need some new plants that meet the following conditions:
"First, they're not picky about the environment. Second, they don't need meticulous care. Third, they have a high annual yield. Fourth, preferably they can be harvested frequently. Fifth, they're nutritionally rich and can meet all human needs...
"I found that mushrooms meet most of my requirements, but they're not enough. They have insufficient yield, monotonous nutrition, narrow taste range, and so on!
"I've been thinking about how to make different types of mushrooms that have different tastes, different nutritional profiles, and different characteristics. For example, ones that are pest-resistant, disease-resistant, can grow and reproduce on their own, taste like beef, produce milk when bitten, and have flesh as delicate as fish..."
Hearing this, Lumian's eyelid twitched.
Some of these new varieties sound very similar to those mushrooms from the New City of Silver...
Could they all be Frank Lee's inventions?
Have I eaten new mushrooms created by Frank Lee?
No wonder I felt something was off at the time...
Lumian glanced at Grimm before saying to the talkative Li Keji, "I can accept your explanation and your ideas."
"See? Those people don't understand science, they even called the police to arrest me!" Li Keji's eyes brightened. "I've been thinking for a long time, and finally came up with a way to realize my ideas."
"What is it?" Lumian raised an eyebrow.
Li Keji said excitedly, "Genetic modification technology!"
For a moment, both Lumian and Grimm fell silent.

After several seconds, Lumian finally grumbled to himself, "So you transplanted all of a cow's genes into a mushroom?"
Li Keji continued, "My research is progressing steadily, and I already have mature samples.
"Yes, they still have various problems, but that doesn't negate their epoch-making significance.
"Those mushrooms just happen to moo, or eat grass, or swim, or run, or drink their own milk. These aren't big problems! Yet they think I'm crazy, that I'm endangering public safety!"
I think so too... Lumian was momentarily speechless.
"..."
Grimm was shocked. After a few seconds, he remembered something. "Did you give some dried mushrooms to..."
He stopped abruptly, not finishing the question.
At that time, monitoring Zhou Mingrui's workstation and having access to all surveillance cameras in the entire building, he had fully witnessed the mutation of those dried mushrooms, and knew their ultimate fate and the potential hidden dangers they had sown.
"I did give some to my colleagues at the tutoring center, but unfortunately there were too few to reward the students," Li Keji said regretfully.
Lumian secretly breathed a sigh of relief and said to Li Keji, "Geniuses are always lonely, misunderstood by others."
"No, I'm not a genius. I just have an enthusiastic heart and the courage to put ideas into practice," Li Keji said, not out of modesty but genuine belief.
"Either way, your original intention wasn't wrong," Lumian could only say this.
He raised his right hand towards Li Keji.
Li Keji understood his intention and reached his own hand through the iron bars, giving him a high five.
"I'll report your situation, but I can't make the decision," Lumian said sincerely.
"Thank you," Li Keji's face was full of gratitude.
As he returned to the bed area to study the mushrooms again, Lumian walked towards the stairwell and said to Grimm, "He's already pregnant."
In reality, he wasn't.
Before Grimm could respond, Lumian added, "But it will take a week for the embryo to stabilize. Then the obstetrics staff can intervene. Before that, no interference can be made."
"I see... Alright, I'll remind them," Grimm didn't understand to what extent godhood limited by this world could achieve.

After leaving Mushu Hospital and watching Grimm leave, Lumian walked across the street and got into the gray sedan driven by Anthony.

Looking at the entrance of Mushu Hospital, he pondered for a moment before saying, "Try to rescue Li Keji from the psychiatric ward within a week."

Otherwise, the "false pregnancy" would be exposed, and he would inevitably be suspected.

Moreover, by then, the bestowed of the Great Mother could still remedy the situation and make Li Keji truly pregnant.

Just as Lumian finished speaking, he suddenly saw two cars stop at the entrance of Mushu Hospital. Among the people getting out were Huang Jiajia, Miss Bernie Huang, and several men in suits.

Is Huang Jiajia bringing help to rescue Li Keji?

Miss Huang won't do anything illegal openly, so those people must be lawyers and some officials, trying to get Li Keji out through proper procedures?

Even if those mushrooms are really like biochemical toxins, Miss Huang can't change the fact that Li Keji is guilty and has mental problems. But she can find a way to transfer him to another hospital, without keeping him in Mushu Hospital...

Does this count as a covert struggle between two official forces, symbolizing the confrontation between Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy? Does Mr. Fool's subconscious want to protect Li Keji?

Lumian watched thoughtfully.

Chapter 962: Anonymous Tip

While Ludwig was making noise eating, Anthony drove the car a bit further to a shaded area to avoid the harsh sunlight.

He rolled down the window slightly to create a gap, while Lumian condensed ice cubes to assist the not-so-effective old air conditioner in providing coolness.

This way, they waited for nearly half an hour until they finally saw Miss Huang and Huang Jiajia's group coming out of Mushu Hospital. Among them were people dressed as police officers, carrying Li Keji with his legs bound and hands cuffed.

After watching them get into different vehicles and leave Mushu Hospital, Lumian received a message from Intis Group Grimm: "The target has been transferred to the psychiatric ward of another hospital. He will undergo another mental evaluation and police questioning.

"In a week, we'll need to take action again."

"Alright," Lumian handed the phone to Anthony, letting him read the content sent by Grimm.

Then, Lumian said, "We can't get involved in the tug-of-war and struggle at the official level right now, nor do we have a way to intervene. But we need to do something covertly. Even if we don't manage the actions of the Great Mother's children a week later, we must consider the possibility of the Celestial Worthy's subordinates infiltrating the other hospital to eliminate Frank Lee's dream manifestation, just like they killed the Oracle.

"They're entirely capable of doing such a thing."

Anthony nodded. "This is also an application of psychological blind spots. Most people would think Li Keji is definitely safe being confined in a psychiatric ward with police guards outside. And since Li Keji's backers have considerable influence and are taking action, Li Keji and his friends probably won't take risky actions in the short term. As a result, most people will unconsciously lower their guard, which presents a good opportunity for assassination."

"Should we go rescue Li Keji in the next couple of days?" Lumian mused uncertainly to himself.

Anthony said calmly, "If we rescue him, he'll truly become a wanted criminal.

"Where do you plan to hide him?

"This might also make us suspects in the eyes of the police. In the dream city, this represents us opposing the dream's main consciousness, which also means we're close to being discovered by the Celestial Worthy."

"Hide him in a painting?" Lumian pondered in response.

The worlds within paintings created by Painters were different from mirror worlds. They weren't interconnected, so one couldn't directly move from one painted world to another. One needed to first reach the corresponding painting before entering.
In other words, if Li Keji was hidden in a painted world, as long as Lumian and the others kept that painting safe, they wouldn't have to worry too much about someone infiltrating through other means or searching via illusory tunnels.
Before Anthony could respond, Lumian laughed at himself.
"We don't necessarily have to risk rescuing Li Keji. We can change our approach.
"We can hide nearby, wait for the Celestial Worthy's subordinates to come eliminate the target, then ambush and take them out.
"When the week's deadline arrives and I go with the children of the Great Mother to induce the embryo in Li Keji's belly, you, Franca, and Jenna can cover your faces and ambush us. I'll pretend to be overwhelmed and flee with the children of the Great Mother, thus missing the chance to have Li Keji give birth within four weeks.
"Failure is better than exposure. At most, it would mean the Child of God loses some prestige in the eyes of Grimm and the others."
At this point, Lumian picked up his phone and sent a message to Jenna: "Be sure to protect Luo Shan well recently."
Since Zaratulstra and the Celestial Worthy's subordinates he represented were eliminating certain dream characters, including those who had directly or indirectly helped Zhou Mingrui, Luo Shan, who had recently reminded Zhou Mingrui, might be one of their primary targets.
Lumian had previously shared information about Zaratulstra, so Jenna and Franca easily understood his meaning and replied with an "Okay."
Both parties then used the Information Shredder to delete their chat history.
"Where to now? Back?" Anthony glanced at the still rather bright sky.
After careful and repeated consideration, Lumian said, "To Star Dream Provisions Store."
Anthony didn't ask why. He rolled up the window and drove off.
About twenty minutes later, they arrived at their destination.
While Anthony took Ludwig to queue at a nearby shop selling guokui—a type of Chinese flatbread—Lumian entered Star Dream Provisions Store and approached the cashier, politely asking the shopkeeper, "Is there any mail for us?"
The shopkeeper, occupied by her phone, nodded and took out a letter, tossing it onto the counter.

Lumian opened it on the spot and began reading.
"Regarding the matter of Mushu Hospital's associate dean, we've communicated with the Sanguine duke and high-level Blessed of the Church of Earth Mother. So far, we haven't found anything unusual about Matriarch Roland, and the Blessed haven't received any warnings from Earth Mother in this regard.
"Are you wondering if the dean of Mushu Hospital might be the dream manifestation of Earth Mother? We can assure you that it hasn't reached that level yet. This is based on divine revelation, so don't worry about what the dean of Mushu Hospital is called, unless it's Omebella..."
Madam Magician, you're quite skilled at telling horror stories too, worthy of being a great writer... Lumian grumbled, continuing to read. "The name Stiano was quite famous in the Fourth Epoch. His full name is Yuggs Stiano. He was one of the founders of the Moses Ascetic Order, but later left the order and disappeared for a long time. It's said that after the War of the Four Emperors and before the Pale Disaster, He became a true god. Yes, you've probably guessed who He is now. Also, remember, when you return to reality, don't speak this name in any language with supernatural power."
It's really the God of Steam and Machinery.. I actually added a true god on WeChat, and He even helped create a mini-program... He's quite friendly and approachable... I wonder how Anthony would react if he knew that was the true god he once believed in, and probably still has some faith in. Would his emotional changes break through a Spectator's instinctual control? Lumian stuffed the reply letter into the Traveler's Bag.
Next, he took out his phone and sent a WeChat message to Anderson Hood: "Why don't you turn yourself in?"
After three or four minutes, "A name that leaves a deep impression on you" replied: "Over the years, there haven't been many people who could confuse and surprise me for a while. You're now one of them.
"Are you planning to report clues about Danitz's death to the police?"
Lumian brought the phone close to his mouth and smiled as he said, "I plan to write the names of all suspects in Danitz's murder in a tip-off letter and submit it to the police department, using official power to trouble that person. Hopefully, it will cause him significant trouble. In others' eyes, what the mute did is no different from what you did.
"Since that's the case, why don't you just turn yourself in? This way, I won't need to write the tip-off letter."

These words were quickly converted to text and sent to Anderson Hood.
Anderson Hood promptly replied, "Are you worried that if you write the tip-off letter, you'll also be targeted by the authorities? So you're instigating me to turn myself in to minimize the risk you need to bear?
"Don't worry, the mute mainly made Danitz less vigilant and alert, but didn't actually do anything. He left no traces at the scene and used the power of paintings to create a strong alibi. Otherwise, as Danitz's roommate who reported to the police just hours after the incident, I would have been the most suspicious person and would have been found out long ago.
"That person is also very cautious and didn't leave any effective clues. However, troubling him a bit, distracting his attention, and making the police truly notice this name is not a bad idea.
"Go ahead and report it, just don't mention my name."
Lumian clicked his tongue and walked back to the cashier, saying to the shopkeeper, "Can you help me write a letter?"
Seeing the shopkeeper raise her head to look at him, causing even the bright sunlight outside to be blocked by clouds, Lumian self-deprecatingly smiled and said, "I'm illiterate. I can't write."
The shopkeeper smiled slightly and asked, "What do you want to write?"
Lumian thought for a few seconds and replied, "Danitz's death is related to Zaratulstra. He murdered Danitz."
The shopkeeper put down her phone, took out paper and pen, and quickly wrote down this paragraph. Finally, she asked, "How many copies?"
"Three," Lumian reduced the quantity to the minimum.
After the shopkeeper finished writing, he thanked her, took the three tip-off letters, and walked to the front of the magic mirror Arrodes.
He pressed his hand towards this ancient silver mirror.
He wanted to test if the supposedly great magic mirror had a corresponding area behind it, whether it was part of the mirror world.
Before any text could appear on the mirror's surface, Lumian's body suddenly lunged forward, quickly dematerializing and diving in.
In the blink of an eye, he saw the void and dark area behind the mirror.
The magic mirror is still a mirror... Indeed, if even mirror-like objects can be treated as mirrors, there's no reason why magic mirrors, which look like real mirrors on the surface, shouldn't

count... Lumian muttered to himself, surveying his surroundings.
He found that the area behind the magic mirror Arrodes seemed a bit different from other mirrors.
The surrounding dark void was deeper, but it also seemed covered by an invisible cloth. Behind the cloth, pairs of eyes were watching him, and inexplicable things were silently flowing.
Indeed special... Lumian didn't waste time. Combining the police department layout provided by the Major Arcana card holders and his own sensing of various mirrors within range, he chose one of them and traversed through.
He wanted to "submit" the tip-off letters through the mirror world!
Soon, he reached his destination and brought his face close to the glass surface, observing the situation outside.
The next second, he saw a person.
The person wore a neat white shirt with black diamond-patterned epaulets on the shoulders. He was a rigid middle-aged man with deep black hair interspersed with some white strands. His dark brown, almost black eyes were looking at the mirror where Lumian was.
Lumian quickly drew back, feeling as if he had been seen by the other party.
This was the office of Police Station No. 1, and that man was the highest leader of the dream city's police force, Yagates.

Chapter 963: Midnight

Lumian had seen in the information provided by the Major Arcana card holders that the original character for Police Chief Yagates of Police Station No. 1 should be Madam Magician's teacher, the Grand Duke of the Tudor Empire, the strongest King of Angels of the Fourth Epoch, Mr. Door Bethel Abraham.

Within this introduction, there was a very important conjecture: suspected to be the dream symbol of the Uniqueness of the Apprentice pathway.

Similarly, the Major Arcana card holders speculated that the active Amon in the dream was a symbol of the Uniqueness of the Marauder pathway, but often also the original body.

This was because Amon was once the true god of the Marauder pathway, occupying the Uniqueness of this pathway for thousands of years, leaving a strong spiritual imprint in the corresponding Uniqueness. It could even be said that for a long time before, He was equivalent to the Uniqueness of the Marauder pathway.

Therefore, before Amon's spiritual imprint in the Uniqueness of the Marauder pathway was completely worn away, Amon had a very close connection with this Uniqueness. He could use this to freely enter and exit this dream city. Even if discovered by the Celestial Worthy and kicked out, He could re-enter without limit.

The Uniqueness of the Major Arcana card holder pathway was part of this true dream, equivalent to Amon also being part of it. If the Celestial Worthy wanted to prevent Amon from re-entering, or to impose comprehensive restrictions on Him so He couldn't do anything, according to the Major Arcana's speculation, there were only three ways:

First, remove the Uniqueness of the Marauder pathway by separating it. Second, quickly wear away Amon's spiritual imprint in that Uniqueness. Third, reach an agreement with Mr. Fool to jointly reject Amon.

Obviously, none of these three methods were feasible—the seemingly most feasible second method had a prerequisite that the Celestial Worthy had a great advantage in the dream, almost half-awakened. Otherwise, in a sleeping state, in fierce opposition with Mr. Fool, even if He was a great existence, it was impossible to wear away Amon's spiritual imprint in the Marauder Uniqueness in a short time.

Of course, Amon would still be restricted in the dream city. As for what kind of restrictions, the Major Arcana card holders didn't know, they could only infer from Amon's behavior that He wasn't completely unrestricted.

Similarly, Mr. Door's spiritual imprint also remained in the Uniqueness of the Apprentice pathway, forming the dream manifestation of Yagates.
Although the Uniqueness of the Apprentice pathway had once been accommodated by Amon, making Him a dual-pathway true god, Amon stayed at this level for a very short time, obviously unable to completely wear away Mr. Door's spiritual imprint.
As soon as Lumian withdrew his body, he immediately disappeared from the spot, traversing towards another mirror, leaving only a few black flames quietly falling, burning away any traces he might have left.
That was the symbol of the Uniqueness of the Door pathway, certainly having some control over the mirror world. Staying behind the current mirror would inevitably lead to exposure!
A second or two later, Lumian transferred to the second target location.
The dream manifestation of the Apprentice pathway Uniqueness is Yagates, the dream manifestation of the Marauder pathway Uniqueness is Amon... is the dream manifestation of the Seer pathway Uniqueness Zhou Mingrui, also the core that Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy are fighting over? Lumian thought while concealing his form, hiding in the darkness.
He patiently waited for a while, making sure no one was tracking him, before approaching the glass mirror surface to peek outside.
Outside was also an office, currently unoccupied.
This was Officer Deng's office.
Lumian took out a tip-off letter, making it "float" up.
The letter then flew out of the mirror surface, falling towards Officer Deng's desk.
Just as it touched the wooden desktop, a streak of black flame suddenly extended from the mirror, quickly burning towards it, illuminating the invisible spider silk that bound it tightly.
The black flames enveloped the letter, burning away residual traces and some of the spider silk, while the remaining silk retracted behind the mirror.
Lumian changed his position once again, traversing to the third mirror.
Outside was still an office, belonging to another police officer, William Wang.
He was a very powerful police officer, corresponding to the real-life figure of the former king of the Loen Kingdom, William Augustus VI, a deceased person.
The Major Arcana card holders were actually a bit confused. Mr. Fool's incarnations walking in the world had no intersection with

William Augustus VI, so why did this deceased king have a corresponding manifestation in the dream city?
Similar situations included William Augustus I, Henry Augustus I, and other ancestors of the Augustus family who were "active" in the police station or court of the dream city, surnamed Wang—the same character for "king."
The Major Arcana card holders could only assume that Mr. Fool had many very ancient incarnations.
Perhaps because the police were in a meeting or on a mission, William Wang's office was also empty. Lumian successfully placed the tip-off letter, then randomly went to another office through the mirror world, dropped the last letter, without risking going to Yagates' place again.
Then, he returned to Star Dream Provisions Store, coming out from the mirror area corresponding to the magic mirror Arrodes.
"Can I borrow paper and pen again?" Lumian walked to the cashier and asked politely.
The shopkeeper put the paper and pen used for writing earlier on the counter.
Lumian began to write a letter to the Major Arcana card holders, with three main points:
First, to remind the Major Arcana card holders to pay attention to Rozanne in reality and provide necessary protection. Second, to ask them to confirm Anderson Hood's real situation. Third, to report the news of Li Keji being arrested.
After mailing the letter and expressing thanks, Lumian returned to the gray sedan.
Anthony and Ludwig had already returned.
Before Anthony started the car, Lumian briefly explained the possible identity of Stiano.
Anthony was silent for a moment, then started the car and said with a sigh, "Even gods were once weak, even gods went through stages like us... This truly is the path of the divine, it makes me feel that gods are no longer so unattainable, no longer naturally noble, naturally gods..."
"Disenchantment?" Lumian asked using the newly learned term.
Anthony turned the steering wheel and said, "But They are indeed fighting against evil gods, protecting the people...
"I remember in the industrial cities along the West Midseashire Coast, those robed clergy would regularly go to factories to hold ceremonies. Now it seems more like packaging major factory inspections, formal use of new machines, clergy getting close to front-line machines and other things into sacred rituals..."
Anthony rambled on about religious stories he heard as a child

and religious ceremonies he experienced as he grew up. Lumian listened quietly, occasionally echoing with a word or two.
...
Dechang Garden, Building 5, Room 1502.
Luo Shan was very happy to find that Franca had returned to normal.
She curiously asked, "What did it feel like at that time?"
"I couldn't breathe, like a fish pulled out of water, a person kicked out of this world." Franca described it simply, without mentioning parts that might make Luo Shan think of dreams.
Jenna then said, "You need to be careful recently. The minions of evil forces are also trying to get close to Zhou Mingrui and deal with people who have directly or indirectly helped Zhou Mingrui. We're worried they might target you."
"Mm-hmm." Luo Shan pointed to the new oil painting and new sketch hanging on the wall, "I've already turned my room into a fortress, they will guard me while I sleep."
Franca and Jenna looked in the direction Luo Shan was pointing, seeing an oil painting of a colorful parrot.
Around the parrot were abstract, mottled color blocks, and its eyes deliberately turned when Franca and the others looked over, as if saying "Hi, I'm alive!"
After looking at the paintings in the living room and bedroom, Jenna nodded and said,
"A Painter's ability is indeed magical.
"However, if you trust us, we can provide you with the ultimate safety guarantee."
"How?" Luo Shan asked.
Jenna didn't hide anything.
"Give us a small amount of blood and hair, we'll make a Mirror Substitution for you. Um, the straight-line distance between our two rooms barely qualifies within the effective range of this ability, and we can bring us closer in your Shaman space to ensure effectiveness.
"But this also means that we can easily and accurately curse you, kill you with that Mirror Substitution."
Luo Shan fell silent.
After a good while, she smiled. "We can try. If you really want to kill me, you've had many opportunities these past few days."
Close to midnight, Luo Shan, who had already washed up, checked the doors, windows, and those paintings before lying down on the bed and turning off the lights.
In the deep darkness, Luo Shan quickly fell asleep, continuing to guard that semi-transparent barrier.

As time ticked by minute by minute, in the parrot oil painting in the living room, those mottled color blocks suddenly began to squirm.
The colorful parrot noticed this change and was about to cry out loudly, but was surged over by those color blocks, covering its mouth and pressing down its wings.
Soon, the colorful parrot was submerged and dissolved by these color blocks, becoming part of them.
These color blocks flowed out of the oil painting like water, leaving the canvas empty.
They surged towards the bedroom in the quiet night, passing through the door crack, coming to Luo Shan's bedside.
Suddenly, this water flow composed of color blocks surged upwards, taking a human form.
The colorful human form quietly looked at the sleeping Luo Shan for twenty to thirty seconds.
Finally, it turned back into a water flow composed of color blocks, returning along its original path to the oil painting in the living room.
The color blocks squirmed, reconstructing the colorful parrot and the surrounding background.
The parrot was identical to before, its eyes still lively.
The next morning, Luo Shan woke up.
She first picked up her phone to check messages, then slowly got up and checked the situation in the bedroom and living room.
"No problems." Luo Shan breathed a sigh of relief and walked towards the bathroom.
...
After parting with Franca and Luo Shan, Jenna went out to observe those dream characters who were relatively close to Zhou Mingrui.
This was her and Anthony's recent task.
Of course, she had already submitted her profile to Hall Film Company as a performing arts student.
And today, she or Anthony would go to contact Peng Deng, a very special dream character.

Chapter 964: A Bit Special

Across from the building where Peng Deng worked.

Jenna walked up to the gray sedan and watched as the door opened and Ludwig got out by himself.

She nodded to Anthony in the driver's seat, then led Ludwig towards a nearby café.

Based on Peng Deng's occupation, they had already formulated a plan for making contact:

If they had money, they could buy a house, then go to the design company where Peng Deng worked for a consultation, using abilities like Hypnosis or Instigation to "designate" Peng Deng as their designer.

Then, they could discuss design ideas, concepts and styles with Peng Deng, and sign a contract, allowing them to repeatedly contact the target through follow-up activities like reviewing plans and visiting sites, gradually becoming familiar, and ultimately figuring out if he had any issues and what those issues were.

But unfortunately, they didn't have that much money.

If they really had money to buy a house, wouldn't it be simpler and more convenient to just rent the magic mirror Arrodes and ask it for detailed information about Peng Deng?

So Anthony only planned to execute the first half of the plan—fabricating the fact that he owned a house, using home renovation as an excuse to go for a consultation, using his Hypnosis ability to get the company boss to assign Peng Deng to talk to him, and finally leaving with the excuse of needing to think it over, without signing a contract.

If Anthony's operation failed, encountering a situation where Peng Deng was unavailable or happened to be meeting a client, and he was assigned to a different designer, then Jenna would execute the second plan.

After entering the café with Ludwig, choosing a window seat, and ordering a cappuccino, a fruit juice, a small cake and a bunch of bread, Jenna looked at the little boy across from her and fell into deep thought, Every time we need to carry out a probing mission, we have to switch who takes him along. It feels so troublesome...

He can certainly be very useful, but a child's appearance, mentality and cognition mean he can't act independently, and we're not comfortable with that... not comfortable with the ordinary people of the dream city...

Should we find a way to get him into some elementary school, so he can attend classes? That way, we wouldn't have to worry about him during the day, just pick him up when it's time.

In Jenna's silence, Ludwig suddenly had a bit of a bad premonition.
At that moment, the small cake was brought over, and he immediately smiled, picking up the fork and spoon.
Jenna thought for a while, but still gave up on the idea of sending Ludwig to elementary school.
That wasn't like going to cram school, which only took an hour and a half with breaks in between and parents waiting outside. He'd have to stay at school all day, and unless they gave Ludwig the Traveler's Bag, there was really no way for him to carry enough food.
What would happen then, a classmate every two periods?
Meanwhile, Anthony saw Peng Deng enter the building.
After 9 o'clock, confirming that Peng Deng hadn't left, he got out of the car, entered the building, took the elevator, and arrived at the design company called "Shengwei".
Anthony said to the receptionist, "I called earlier to inquire and made an appointment."
The receptionist checked the record book and led Anthony to a meeting room.
Soon after, the person in charge of the design company came over and chatted with Anthony for a bit, confirming the style he wanted.
During this process, Anthony deliberately mentioned Peng Deng, saying he had seen this designer's works and actual results on the company's public account and felt they matched his ideas well.
Undoubtedly, while saying this, Anthony looked into the eyes of the person in charge, using Hypnosis lightly. Earlier during the phone communication, he had also used psychological methods for guidance, though he couldn't directly apply Hypnosis then.
"Please wait here, I'll go get the designer," the person in charge stood up and left the meeting room, while a staff member poured Anthony a glass of water and put out some fruit.
About ten minutes later, Anthony saw Peng Deng appear at the door.
Peng Deng had black hair and brown eyes, with an ordinary appearance. His hair was styled with some parts fluffed up, and he wore a black T-shirt with a trendy brand feel, carrying a laptop.
Anthony stood up calmly, not showing any unusual behavior.
After the company manager's introduction, Anthony began chatting with Peng Deng, mainly describing his needs while Peng Deng listened and occasionally asked more in-depth questions to understand the details.
After Anthony finished speaking, Peng Deng operated a laptop and projector, saying, "I found a few images earlier, see if they match

the feeling you want."
Soon, Anthony saw an image: a modern-style living room, bright and clean with golden sunlight shining through the windows, a vase placed in just the right position with a bouquet of fresh flowers, and two oil paintings hanging on either side, depicting sparse, beautiful forests and lush green fields...
Anthony suddenly felt this was exactly what he wanted.
Peng Deng continued to show several more images, with styles similar to the previous one, and each seemed to perfectly match Anthony's requirements.
He accurately grasped the vision I had in mind just based on the description over the phone and our face-to-face conversation? Isn't this a bit special? Anthony didn't immediately express his thoughts, but continued discussing with Peng Deng how these images could be combined into a whole and the specific costs for the designer's fee.
After chatting for a while longer, Anthony stood up and said, "I'll think about it some more."
"Alright." Peng Deng didn't try hard to persuade him, and escorted Anthony to the company entrance.
Anthony went downstairs, crossed the street, and passed by the café where Jenna and Ludwig were.
When the two parties met through the glass window, Anthony nodded slightly.
Then, he walked straight towards the rented gray sedan.
Jenna withdrew her gaze and continued watching Ludwig eat.
According to their prior agreement, she easily understood without needing to guess what Anthony's nod just now meant: I've met Peng Deng and made contact. Now, I need to self-isolate until dawn tomorrow to see if any abnormalities occur.
...
Tech Building, Intis Group, Administration Department.
After being busy for a while, Luo Shan started to slack off.
She picked up her phone and sent a message to True Hidden Blade: "Do I need to go hint at Zhou Mingrui about his own specialness?"
Franca, sitting in the workstation diagonally in front of Luo Shan, hesitated for a while before replying: "Not for now. Wait until my companion and I can no longer act, then you can do it."
Luo Shan was about to say something more when Deputy Director Zhang Qing came out of his office, clapped his hands and said, "Mr. Huang will be coming over shortly, bringing that VIP from last time to continue touring the company..."
Franca was worried that if Luo Shan hinted too deeply, she would also encounter abnormalities. While she and her companions

might be kicked out of the dream, dream characters might just die suddenly, or get hit and run over by a bus after work.
She preferred Luo Shan to only act as her assistant for now, cooperating with her to hint at Zhou Mingrui.
Luo Shan was about to say something more when Deputy Director Zhang Qing came out of his office, clapped his hands and said, "Mr. Huang will be coming over shortly, bringing that VIP from last time to continue touring the company..."
A rustling sound suddenly arose as many employees took out their makeup bags and makeup mirrors.
That VIP from last time? Franca used her phone to ask Luo Shan: "Is it Zaratulstra?"
"It should be, he's the only VIP recently, involved in the integration and merger of certain subsidiaries, as well as a big deal," Luo Shan replied quickly. "What should we do next?"
She meant, should they let Zaratulstra come into contact with Zhou Mingrui?
Didn't Lumian report Zaratulstra yesterday? The police station has no evidence and can't restrict the foreign guest's freedom for now? Zaratulstra just went to see Zhou Mingrui at the cram school yesterday, and now he's coming to the company again today. *What does he want to do?* Ah, Lumian was right, passively dealing with things can easily lead to problems. It's better to actively eliminate hidden dangers... Franca looked at her phone, her thoughts racing quickly.
After nearly a minute, she replied to Luo Shan: "Stay calm; let me see the specific situation before deciding. You just need to cooperate with me.
"Don't worry, with so many people in the company watching, Zaratulstra can't do anything."
If worse comes to worst, I'll risk losing my job and pour a glass of water on Zaratulstra's or Mr. Huang's crotch!
Seeing that Luo Fu didn't take out mirrors or put on makeup, several nearby employees withdrew their observing gazes, feeling relieved and focusing on themselves.
Soon after, the group chat reported Mr. Huang's itinerary: "Mr. Huang has brought the VIP to the 16th floor!"
Tech Building, 16th floor.
Huang Tao, dressed casually, sat down with the formally dressed Zaratulstra in a room filled with various classical objects and opened a bottle of Aurmir red wine.
"You said you bought a very peculiar mirror?" Huang Tao continued their previous topic.
Zaratulstra smiled and said, "Yes, it possesses a kind of magic. It

can let us see our inner selves."
As he spoke, the old man's deep blue, almost black eyes moved slightly, and he took out a small mirror with a classical design, luxurious style, and inlaid with gems from his suit pocket.
At this time, his and Huang Tao's entourage had all been left outside the current room, with only a few security personnel guarding at the door, not approaching them.
"Look, this is how I appear in the mirror," Zaratulstra placed the mirror in front of his face.
Huang Tao leaned in and saw that the reflection in the mirror was not the elderly Zaratulstra, but a man in his thirties with deep black hair and ordinary features.
Could it be a high-tech mirror with artificial intelligence? Huang Tao mumbled based on his experience and understanding.
"Would you like to try?" Zaratulstra asked him.
"Sure." Huang Tao took the mirror with interest, quietly checking if the item had any hidden switches and what material the mirror surface was made of.
He didn't find any issues, so he brought the mirror up to his face with curiosity.
He then saw himself in the mirror.
It was completely different from what he had imagined.
The him in the mirror was a woman, wearing an ornate golden crown, with slightly curly chestnut hair, blue eyes, a high nose bridge, thin lips, and an alluring appearance with an indescribable charm.
Huang Tao was stunned, as if he had seen the anima in his heart.
...
Lumian, who started his middle shift today, only needed to arrive at the company before 4:30 p.m.
Since late last night, he had been using the mirror world to sneak into a hospital called "Crimson Moon", where Li Keji was currently being held.

Chapter 965: Experimenting Again

Lumian hid behind a mirror-like object on the corridor wall, gazing at Li Keji's hospital room through the hard barrier.

He had maintained this position for many hours, only occasionally adjusting to relax.

He had waited all night but hadn't seen Zaratulstra or other subordinates of the Celestial Worthy come to eliminate Li Keji.

After an unknown amount of time, as sunlight shone in from the other end of the corridor, different rooms in the psychiatric ward gradually became lively. Someone was singing loudly, someone was banging on doors, someone was knocking on something unknown, as if calling for breakfast.

At this moment, Lumian saw a large amount of milky white liquid surge out from the gap between Li Keji's hospital room door and the solid floor.

Milk? Lumian's gaze froze slightly.

A second later, he found that the milky white liquid, which seemed to be milk, receded like a tide back into Li Keji's hospital room. The floor became clean again, with only varying degrees of wet traces remaining.

Lumian watched silently.

A few minutes later, with his eagle-like vision, he felt that there seemed to be something indescribable at the doorway of the hospital room.

He carefully pressed his face against the mirror surface, penetrating out slightly.

The scene before his eyes instantly lost its mirrored feel, becoming clearer.

He then saw some small, distinct white lines, and noticed finer, less obvious white filaments around them.

These things as a whole looked like intersecting, much thinner snowflakes, or as if countless white fuzz were mixed together.

Compared to the spider silk of Demonesses, they were all opaque, tinted with color, and could still be discovered upon careful observation.

Mycelium? Lumian made a guess.

This was based on speculation about Li Keji's own special nature.

After a few seconds, these mycelium uniformly retracted, passing through the door gap and disappearing into the corridor.

A scene spontaneously emerged in Lumian's mind: a strangely shaped giant mushroom man, no, a giant mushroom, walking to the door, carefully extending its mycelium—its goals unknown.

Lumian fell silent once again.

He seriously pondered a question, Is letting Zaratulstra and other subordinates of the Celestial Worthy eliminate Li Keji ultimately a bad thing or a good thing...
As long as they are prevented from taking Li Keji's corpse to the basement of Mushu Hospital and using the Mother's power to give him new life, the whole thing doesn't seem that unacceptable...
Hmm, Frank Lee's mushrooms in the dream city seemed to have overlapped with Mr. Fool's idealistic cognition, becoming more terrifying and bizarre than in reality. If they lost control later, who knows which side it would benefit...
No, no, no, fire is also dangerous, but fire can be exploited...
This guy is suitable to be confined in a psychiatric ward, to be released when needed, or to borrow a few mushrooms with unique functions...
Can a psychiatric ward really contain him? Should he be helped to enter prison, to be controlled by the officials representing the dream's main consciousness?
But if so, it would be very troublesome for us to utilize him, and moreover, he doesn't look like someone without mental problems in any way. Franca had explained before that in the dream city, such mentally ill patients don't need to go to prison, they just need to receive prolonged treatment in a mental hospital...
Lumian withdrew his face, distancing himself from the mirror surface.
At 10 a.m., he saw Huang Jiajia, Bernie Huang, accompanied by a lawyer, Officer Deng, and a doctor in a white coat enter this ward.
Only then did he feel relieved. He traversed to the rear-view mirror of a car in the underground parking lot, jumped out, and directly teleported back to the rented apartment in Xinhong District.
At this time, Anthony was in self-isolation, Ludwig had been taken away by Jenna, and Lumian casually ate some bread before preparing to lie down on the bed to catch up on sleep.
Just as he had lain down, he felt his phone vibrate once.
The message was from True Hidden Blade: "Zaratulstra has come to visit the group again, now on the 16th floor, hasn't come down yet."
Zaratulstra wasn't affected by the tip-off letter? Does the tip-off letter need evidence, otherwise the police would have to investigate for a while, obtain sufficient evidence before they can arrest a foreign guest? Zaratulstra is still very cautious, and the identity of a foreign guest is also very clever... Lumian sat on the bed, pondered and analyzed for a while before replying to Franca: "No need to interfere with Zaratulstra's visit, but remind Zhou Mingrui to be careful through Luo Shan."

...
Inside the Administration Department of Intis Group.
Franca sent a message to Luo Shan: "If that guy comes to visit the tech department later, remember to warn Zhou Mingrui to be careful about safety.
"No rush for now, what if the enemy chooses to visit other departments or other subsidiaries? Warning Zhou Mingrui in advance would plunge him into endless suspicion, guarding against everyone around him, which would greatly affect his mental state in the long run."
Luo Shan replied with a "nodding cat" emoji.
To their surprise, Mr. Huang didn't bring Zaratulstra down for a tour, the two stayed on the 16th floor until noon before leaving via the private elevator.
"Alert lifted, the enemy didn't contact the target, so Luo Shan didn't give any reminder." Franca reported the situation to Lumian during lunch break.
Lumian quickly replied: "Then I'll carry out the step of hinting at Zhou Mingrui about the existence of supernatural powers this afternoon, and be a bit more aggressive. You, Jenna, and Anthony, from now on, don't contact me, delete the chat history, even my WeChat and QQ numbers, and add them back tomorrow afternoon."
"Won't this get mixed up with the results of Anthony's probe of Peng Deng? If he gets kicked out, we might have trouble distinguishing if it's Peng Deng's problem or something related to your side." Franca raised a detailed question.
"It won't, we isolated from each other last night, our experimental results won't affect each other." Lumian had made preparations yesterday.
Since Franca's consciousness returned to the body of "Luo Fu", he had started preparing.
At 4 p.m., Lumian arrived at Intis Group early and enjoyed an early dinner.
Then, he and Old Xia took over from their colleagues and started patrolling the floors.
After completing this task, they replaced colleagues who were rushing to the cafeteria and started monitoring the surveillance.
Lumian seemed to be observing the situation on different floors, but his attention was entirely on the internal parts of Intis Group, on that area of the 10th floor.
Finally, he saw Zhou Mingrui leave his workstation, walk out of the tech department, and head towards the public restroom in the middle of the corridor.

Lumian stood up abruptly, clutching his stomach and said to Old Xia, "The food was too spicy just now, I need to go to the bathroom."
Without waiting for Old Xia's response, he left the surveillance room directly.
Old Xia turned to look at his back and said almost inaudibly, "He's only been working for a week and already learned to take a shit break?"
In the corridor, Lumian avoided two security personnel coming out of the elevator area, turned into the stairwell, merged into the shadows, and quickly went down.
In less than thirty seconds, he reached the 10th floor.
Then, pretending to be checking a problem he had discovered during his earlier floor patrol, he openly entered the corridor between the Administration Department and Technology Department, arriving outside the restroom.
He looked left and right, then quickly walked into the men's side with small steps.
At this time, Zhou Mingrui was washing his hands at the sink.
Lumian glanced inside the restroom, confirming that no one was at the urinals, and one of the four stalls seemed to be locked.
Zhou Mingrui turned around and just saw him.
Lumian took out a lighter and smiled.
His thumb repeatedly pressed virtually above the lighter, not touching it, yet the lighter produced a series of crimson red flames.
Seeing this, Zhou Mingrui, who already had doubts, instantly became mentally tense.
Is this supernatural power or some kind of magic trick?
Lumian stepped back twice, pressing his other hand on the edge of the men's restroom door frame, quietly activating a black mark on his body.
Bottle of Fiction!
He isolated the area of the sink from the rest of the bathroom and the space outside.
Lumian looked at Zhou Mingrui, who seemed ready to lash out at any moment, and smiled slightly. "I've drunk a beverage called 'Hunter'."
You really do have issues... Zhou Mingrui's eyes narrowed imperceptibly, his doubts and worries of many days finally becoming reality.
Lumian turned his head to glance towards the urinals. "I came to you to warn you. Be careful of that foreign guest called Zaratulstra."
Zaratulstra... Zhou Mingrui had a deep impression of this long

name.
He had once been assigned by Mr. Huang as a technical person to receive Zaratulstra, and was responsible for being the interpreter and explainer, but the other party either had a mechanical failure with their flight or encountered severe weather, so he never managed to receive him.
Later, he got sick and took leave after listening to a song, missing Zaratulstra's first visit to the company.
After that, he had seen the group's publicity, knowing what Zaratulstra looked like from videos and photos.
Reminded by Lumian, Zhou Mingrui suddenly remembered that the old man standing at the door of the Business English class before Luo Shan warned him to be careful yesterday seemed to be Zaratulstra.
Was Luo Shan's warning also pointing to Zaratulstra?
How did she know Zaratulstra was visiting Dream Tutoring Classes?
Right, Li Ming was there yesterday...
Are Li Ming and Luo Shan in cahoots?
Luo Fu joined only one day later than Li Ming...
As these thoughts flashed through Zhou Mingrui's mind, Lumian offered no explanation, lifted the Bottle of Fiction, and walked out of the men's restroom.
Zhou Mingrui looked at his back, suddenly feeling that the hidden currents around him were much more fierce and exaggerated than he had imagined.
...
After another round of floor patrol, Lumian stood at the office window, watching as the last golden-red glow of the sunset was swallowed by darkness.
Night had officially arrived.
By this time, Luo Shan, Luo Fu, and Zhou Mingrui had all gotten off work, with the latter having left just a few minutes ago.
Lumian looked at the brightly lit buildings, slightly raising his chin and curling the corners of his mouth, waiting for the possible "exile".
This time, if he was kicked out of the dream, Zaratulstra probably wouldn't be spared either.
A one-for-one exchange was worth it!

Chapter 966: Different Treatment

Time passed minute by minute. Lumian saw office workers continuing to leave the Tech Building, while carts appeared in less conspicuous places along the road, selling fried noodles, stir-fried rice noodles, braised dishes, fried skewers, barbecue and other foods.

Cars drove by with their lights on, still busy.

Nothing's happened yet... Lumian had long lost sight of Zhou Mingrui, but he didn't feel anything unusual.

At this moment, Old Xia walked in.

"Let's go patrol again, so Team Lead Xu doesn't say we're hiding in the office slacking off."

"Okay." Lumian nodded.

Then, he saw Old Xia turn his body somewhat awkwardly.

"What's wrong? Did you hurt your back?" Lumian stopped, still close to the window.

Old Xia turned his head, his expression unchanged as he said, "I'm not... What... ah..."

As he spoke, his lips sometimes paused mid-movement, and his accent changed.

Before Lumian could respond, Old Xia looked away and continued walking towards the door.

His knees, ankles, arms, and shoulders seemed as if filled with lead, heavy and stiff, with a sense of sluggishness.

Lumian suddenly recalled the puppet show he had seen in the basement of the Alone Bar in Trier, feeling as if invisible strings were tied to all of Old Xia's joints.

Old Xia now looks more like a puppet than a human...

Has he... been... marionettized?

My thoughts... also seem to be... lagging...

Am I also... being marionettized?

Lumian was startled. He lowered his head and tried to raise his right arm.

In his view, his arm lifted, paused, lifted again, and paused again, as if watching a video with slow Internet speed.

Indeed... Lumian's first reaction was that the Celestial Worthy was marionettizing him, but he didn't feel the painful discomfort of a fish leaving water or a person leaving air that Franca had described.

He immediately thought of another possibility: Zaratulstra or other subordinates of the Celestial Worthy were hiding in the shadows, trying to deal with him!

Lumian slightly moved his neck, turning his gaze to the window

outside.
He found that the vehicles on the road all paused simultaneously, but without the forward surge that would occur with sudden braking.
After a brief freeze, these vehicles started moving again.
Two seconds later, they stopped again.
This made Lumian feel as if he was watching surveillance footage, frame by frame!
Not only the vehicles, but the vendors selling fried noodles and their customers also showed similar, abnormal stuttering.
Such large-scale... marionettizing... in the dream... city... can only... be done by... the Celestial Worthy... or... Mr. Fool...
The anomaly... has come...
Lumian tried hard to concentrate, preparing to actively exit the dream.
Although he wasn't sure why his experience was different from Franca's, the current situation and the changes around him made him feel this wasn't something he could escape or fight against with his personal abilities.
The only solution was to actively exit the dream before becoming a marionette himself.
Of course, Lumian didn't immediately put this into practice, because he didn't need to use the Information Shredder to delete important contacts from his phone—this had already been done in advance. He still had some time to experience the current changes and see if he could observe any hidden information.
After about ten seconds, Lumian's thoughts suddenly became smooth again, no longer feeling as if his head was stuffed with paste.
It's over? No more marionettization? Lumian, already looking outside, noticed that the vehicles on the road no longer had strange pauses.
Those vendors and pedestrians had also returned to normal.
"Why aren't you moving yet? What's on your mind?" Old Xia turned around again, urging Lumian.
Lumian's eyes moved slightly, and he said with a grin, "Ouch, my stomach hurts. I'm going to the bathroom."
With that, he ran off, passing Old Xia and rushing into the public restroom on this floor.
Old Xia looked at his back and cursed amusingly, "Lazy cattle and horses shit and piss the most!"
Lumian entered a stall, locked the door, and quickly used Spirit World Traversal.
He teleported to another public restroom, appearing in midair on

the men's side.
Seeing no one in the stalls below, Lumian floated down lightly and locked the door.
This was the hotel where Zaratulstra was staying. Before going to "wait" outside Li Keji's ward at Crimson Moon Hospital, Lumian had come here to scout around—although he had temporarily shelved the plan to actively attack and assassinate Zaratulstra, changing it to using Li Keji to ambush potential enemies, when time allowed, he would still make more preparations, in case Zaratulstra chose to finish off Li Keji indirectly. At that time, the backup plan might become the primary one.
Lumian took out a mirror and placed it on top of the water tank.
Then, he pressed his right hand on it.
His figure suddenly leaned forward, rapidly becoming ethereal, entering the glass mirror surface.
Using the mirror world, he traversed to the glass window inside Zaratulstra's suite.
Under the night sky, this was undoubtedly a real mirror.
Lumian didn't bring his face close to the glass surface, but peered into the room from a distance.
He wasn't sure if Zaratulstra had returned to the hotel yet, maybe he was still out socializing. He also didn't dare use divination to find the other's current location, fearing it might alert a true Seer.
The next second, he saw a figure. The figure wore a black formal suit, with slightly messy white hair, hanging from the main light, swaying gently, like the corpse of a hanged man.
Zaratulstra!
Wh— Lumian was a bit shocked:
Zaratulstra was hanged by Mr. Fool, just like he hanged the Oracle?
Was my afternoon hint to Zhou Mingrui really effective?
I originally only thought about getting Zaratulstra kicked out of the dream, and I was prepared to pay the price of one entry chance for the dream...
As Lumian's thoughts raced, he saw twisted, writhing, transparent maggots falling from Zaratulstra's body.
These worms quickly faded and disappeared as soon as they fell onto the bed and floor, as if they were just illusions.
Lumian then saw a figure walk out of the void.
The figure wore a black formal suit, with all-white hair, a rather thick beard on his face, and eyes so deep blue they were almost pure black without light.
Zaratulstra!
Another Zaratulstra!

A still-living Zaratulstra!
Zaratulstra raised his head, expressionlessly looking at the "himself" hanging from the chandelier.
The hanging figure quickly faded and became transparent like the maggots that had fallen earlier, until it disappeared.
Was the one hanging just now Zaratulstra's Historical Void image?
Did Zaratulstra sense the danger in advance and summon a historical image to replace himself? Otherwise, at Sequence 7, a historical image couldn't last long... Lumian withdrew his gaze, no longer looking at Zaratulstra to avoid being noticed.
The information provided by the Major Arcana card holders about the abilities of the Seer pathway up to Sequence 3 Scholar of Yore was quite detailed. For Sequence 2 Miracle Invoker, it only briefly explained what wishes and miracles were. Beyond that, the Major Arcana card holders hardly mentioned anything. The terms Grafting and Fooling were only briefly mentioned later to explain specific events.
Standing in the void black area behind the mirror, Lumian combined his own experience with Zaratulstra's different encounter to make some guesses about what had just happened.
It's preliminarily confirmed that this was an anomaly brought about by my daytime hint to Zhou Mingrui.
On my side, pedestrians and cars within the range were all affected by marionettization, not just myself... This indicates that my hint to Zhou Mingrui did indeed attract the Celestial Worthy's attention, but because the hint was given during the day, the Celestial Worthy couldn't accurately lock onto me, only roughly circle out a range?
During a collective marionettization, if I resist or struggle using Beyonder powers, I would be quickly locked onto by the Celestial Worthy. If I choose to exit the dream to avoid danger, the Celestial Worthy's goal would also be achieved, making me consume one chance to enter and exit the dream... How cunning...
My reminder to Zhou Mingrui was also perceived by Mr. Fool, and the name Zaratulstra was grasped by Him, so Zaratulstra encountered targeted rapid marionettization, but this was borne by the image from the Historical Void...
Why is Zaratulstra so calm now? Is this what a Faceless is? Or is He certain that before new changes occur, Mr. Fool's gaze will only come once, and if dodged, it's truly dodged?
Tomorrow, we'll get Luo Shan to probe Zhou Mingrui to see if he still remembers the threat of Zaratulstra. If he remembers, and Zaratulstra doesn't encounter marionettization again or end up kicked out of the dream, then it should be that the Celestial

Worthy provided help, using the death of a historical projection to resolve this incident...
Can we also use similar methods to avoid being kicked out of the dream?
Or, verbal threats from others and face-to-face stimulation are still different, so Franca and Zaratulstra's experiences are also quite different...
Thinking of this, Lumian quietly looked outside the mirror again.
He saw Zaratulstra walk to the door as if nothing had happened, open it, let several followers in, and discuss tomorrow's business negotiation matters with them.
Lumian felt a bit of regret.
He had just been thinking about whether to take the opportunity to attempt an assassination when Zaratulstra's historical projection was hanging and the real body appeared!
His curse still had the characteristic of not being transferable by paper figurine, as long as it affected the real body.
After glancing at those followers and weighing the possibility of Beyonders among them, Lumian silently left the glass window that could serve as a mirror and traversed back to that bathroom.
He had just left for two seconds when Zaratulstra and his followers in the room either half-turned their bodies or turned their heads, all casting their gazes towards the glass window at the edge of the living room reflecting the night scene.
...
In a cheap motel.
Anthony, who was self-isolating after contacting Peng Deng, sat on the edge of the bed, waiting for a possible anomaly.

Chapter 967: A New Problem

Anthony hadn't drawn the curtains in his room, as he still needed to observe the situation outside.

This was to compare with his own condition.

After sitting for a while, he stood up and walked to the window, admiring the city scene that was still glittering even in the deep night.

At this moment, he felt a strong dizziness.

He immediately realized that the air around him had been suddenly drained. No, a more accurate description was that he had been "thrown" out of the world, separated from the air.

At the same time, his thoughts began to become confused and sluggish. His hands involuntarily reached for his throat, wanting to pull out his trachea and plug it back into the original world.

This is very similar to... Franca's... description...

Contact with... Peng Deng... also leads to... being kicked out... of the dream...

More importantly... I contacted... the target... during the day... and didn't hint at... the existence of... supernatural powers... or hidden... bizarre events...

Contacting... Zhou Mingrui... in this way... wouldn't cause... problems...

Is Peng Deng… more special than… Zhou Mingrui?

Anthony calmly examined his own state, thinking about the process of this experiment.

When he felt he could no longer resist the tendency to become a marionette, he used that force trying to kick him out to actively exit the dream.

He opened his eyes and saw the dark ceiling and the crimson moonlight shining through the thick curtains.

This scene was not present in the dream city.

Anthony had heard from Franca about the situation in reality. After briefly confirming the things he was carrying and the state of his body, he got out of bed and walked towards the bathroom.

He had also planned to go to the bathroom in the dream city.

After a while, Anthony heard a knocking sound on the door.

Without needing to ask, he naturally knew that Madam Justice and Madam Susie were outside.

Anthony opened the door and, as expected, saw the Major Arcana card holder and the gentle, intelligent golden retriever.

Before he could greet them, Madam Justice asked in a soft voice, "Why did you suddenly leave the dream?"

"I was kicked out," Anthony replied, slightly confused.

Madam Justice shook her head. "Although I can no longer influence Mr. Fool's dream, I have been monitoring the changes in the dream.
"I didn't notice any signs of you being rejected by the dream."
"But..." Anthony didn't question Madam Justice's statement. He recounted in full detail how he had contacted Peng Deng, how he had self-isolated, and what he had just experienced.
Madam Justice didn't interrupt Anthony's words, listening patiently and attentively to his statement. Then, she nodded gently and said, "I believe what you felt was inner fear. Your fear turned the description from Two of Cups into reality, making you mistakenly believe you were being kicked out of the dream, so you chose to actively leave.
"As a Psychiatrist, both you and I know very well that this level of fear, fear without warning, is not normal at all. This is the anomaly brought about by your first contact with Peng Deng during the day."
"Fear... the contact with Peng Deng triggered my fear of being kicked out of the dream, and let it reach its peak in the early hours, evolving into an almost tangible hallucination?" Anthony recalled the previous events and agreed with Madam Justice's speculation. He muttered thoughtfully, "Is this also a manifestation of being watched by that Celestial Worthy, a symbol of one of His abilities? Or is Peng Deng's uniqueness not directly related to that Celestial Worthy, but has another source?"
"We're not sure either, because Peng Deng's role and position in the dream city are too special. We put him in the last few steps when it comes to confirming the situation. Unfortunately, we couldn't influence the dream anymore before we got to that part of the process. This time can be considered our Tarot Club's first real contact with Peng Deng..." At this point, Madam Justice's emerald-like eyes moved slightly, her mouth half-open, stopping her subsequent words.
After two seconds, she said thoughtfully, "Perhaps the fact that 'we put Peng Deng at the end to probe' itself has some problems, but there are too many possible reasons. Fooling can certainly achieve this...
"We also don't know if that Celestial Worthy can unconsciously trigger the fear in your heart and let it burst at a specific moment. We know very little about the authority and corresponding existence symbols of Sequence 0 of the Seer pathway, especially the latter."
Although Madam Justice didn't finish all her speculations, Anthony roughly knew what her possible thoughts might be. He

said carefully, "We need to design a more detailed experimental plan specifically for Peng Deng in the future to determine the source of the problem.
"What we can be sure of now is that there is a certain difference between him and Zhou Mingrui. The anomalies that appear due to contact with them under the same conditions are different."
Madam Justice smiled and said, "Your contact with Peng Deng this time has been very informative for me.
"Hmm... don't rush back to the dream, stay outside for three hours first, walk around the villa, eat something.
"This doesn't mean there will be a problem if you go back now, you weren't kicked out, we don't have that concern. This is just a simple adjustment to your psychological state: after staying in the dream city for a long time, it's easy to confuse reality and dreams. Since you've already left, it's best to re-experience reality and deepen the corresponding psychological cognition."
"Yes, Madam Justice." As a Psychiatrist, Anthony naturally understood the meaning of these words.
To use a new term he learned in the dream city: prevention is better than cure.
...
After returning to the Tech Building, Lumian continued the task of patrolling the floors with Old Xia until they got off work at 12:30 a.m.
He directly teleported to the vicinity of Crimson Moon Hospital, then used the mirror world to reach outside Li Keji's ward, waiting for possible attacks.
Of course, he didn't stay in the same position all the time, nor did he always remain at Crimson Moon Hospital.
He picked out three time periods he thought were most suitable for assassination, only ambushing during these three periods, and being normal the rest of the time such as sleeping at home or being on his phone.
During those three time periods, he would randomly choose one of six hiding spots each time, with no two consecutive times being the same.
This was to guard against Zaratulstra and the Celestial Worthy's other subordinates thinking that someone might be using Li Keji as bait to ambush them, and launching targeted attacks in return.
At daybreak, Lumian went out to buy breakfast.
On the way, he deliberately turned into a quiet alley and met Jenna.
This was arranged by both parties.
Jenna handed Ludwig over to Lumian, as she had an interview at

Hall Film Company today and couldn't watch over the child.
Lumian looked around and told Jenna about what happened last night, asking her to share it with Franca.
Lumian finally said, "At present, it seems that contacting Zhou Mingrui during the day and hinting at the existence of supernatural powers also carries risks, but won't receive precise strikes. However, after being remembered by Zhou Mingrui and knowing the corresponding danger, one will encounter rapid marionettization at night, which can possibly be avoided. Currently, we can't determine if it's an isolated attack. I'll observe Zaratulstra's situation again tonight.
"Get Luo Shan to find Zhou Mingrui and remind him about the Zaratulstra issue again, see if he has forgotten the corresponding things. Don't worry, after I directly mentioned Zaratulstra yesterday, Zhou Mingrui should have guessed that I'm on the same side as Franca and Luo Shan. He doesn't know about your and Anthony's existence for now."
Jenna had just tersely acknowledged when both of them almost simultaneously received a friend request from "An Ruide".
After exchanging glances, Lumian gestured to Jenna not to add him yet, and accepted the request himself.
After An Ruide talked about last night's situation and Madam Justice's guesses, he confirmed the other's identity and sent a voice message with a smile: "Let's talk in detail when we get back to the rental house. I've made some significant discoveries on my end too."
"It seems Peng Deng is even more special than we imagined..." Lumian then told Jenna about Anthony's experience.
Jenna listened carefully, added Anthony back, and waved goodbye to Lumian and Ludwig.
...
In the administrative department of the Tech Building.
When Franca and Luo Shan went to the bathroom together, taking advantage of the moment when no one else was there, she told the other about the request relayed by Jenna.
Luo Shan asked nervously yet excitedly, "How should I hint?"
Franca used her Instigator expertise to help come up with a set of talking points.
After about half an hour, Zhou Mingrui, wearing a gray shirt, came to the administrative department again, asking Luo Shan if there was anything going on in the company recently, saying they needed to work overtime if there was something, and even if there wasn't, they still needed to work a bit extra.
Great question! Luo Shan praised Zhou Mingrui in her heart, and

said with a smile, "The merger negotiations between the group and a large company have entered the formal process.
"The boss of that company is Zaratulstra, who has visited twice."
When saying the name "Zaratulstra", Luo Shan looked at Zhou Mingrui, trying to read the changes in his expression.
Zhou Mingrui said in realization, "Previously, Mr. Huang even grabbed me to pick him up at the airport, to be an interpreter and guide, but unfortunately, I didn't get to."
"When he came to visit the company, you weren't here either. Seems like you were on sick leave? Yesterday he came again but stayed on the 16th floor the whole time and didn't visit other departments, so you haven't met him at all." Luo Shan said deliberately.
This was the script Franca had prepared for her.
Zhou Mingrui paused for a moment, then said thoughtfully, "Maybe there's some force in the universe preventing me from meeting him."
After chatting for a few more sentences, Zhou Mingrui left Luo Shan's workstation and walked towards the door.
As he passed by Franca's desk, Franca suddenly spoke. "Watch out!"
Zhou Mingrui quickly turned sideways, looking at Franca.
Franca pointed at the wet marks on the ground and said, "I just spilled some water on the ground, it's a bit slippery, be careful."
"Oh, oh, you scared me," Zhou Mingrui responded with a smile.
He walked around the wet area and left the administrative department. The smile on his face gradually faded.
Luo Fu told me to be careful? Luo Shan just mentioned Zaratulstra...
Are they together telling me to be careful of Zaratulstra?
Hmm, they are indeed on the same side as Li Ming...
In the administrative department, Luo Shan sent a message to Franca: "He has some vigilance towards that enemy, he probably hasn't forgotten your warning."

Chapter 968: The Actor

Hall Film Company, Talent Department.

Today, Jenna hadn't applied extravagant makeup, nor had she deliberately made herself look ugly. She simply maintained her natural "coloring" as a local with black hair and brown eyes, with softer facial features. She was simple and fresh, fully displaying her natural beauty and feminine charm, causing many passing employees and fellow interviewees to turn their heads.

"Next, Jian Na," called out the employee at the conference room door.

Jenna stood up, recalling the education she had received at the Théâtre de l'Ancienne Cage à Pigeons, and walked in gracefully.

The four interviewers, two men and two women, who were writing and drawing, looked up at the sound of her greeting. Their eyes all lit up, though with subtle differences in emotion.

"Jian Na, graduated from the Performance Department of the National Drama Academy?" One of the female interviewers read out Jenna's educational background.

This was the identity that Madam Justice had crafted for Jenna. As far as Jenna knew, Madam Justice's corresponding image in the dream was Holly, the actual executive of Hall Film Company and the producer of "The Great Pirate 3".

In other words, she was the boss of these interviewers present.

And Hall Film Company was just a non-core industry under the Hall Group, whose foundation was various banks. In the dream city, its financial power was second only to the Intis Group.

"Yes." Jenna didn't hide her pleasant voice.

After the interviewers asked various questions, the initial interviewer drew out a card and handed it to Jenna.

"Please perform a segment according to the requirements on this."

Seeing Jenna's clear and beautiful appearance and clean aura, this interviewer deliberately chose a performance themed around "coquettishness" to test her.

Jenna took the card, but before she could read the topic, she heard the interviewer add, "You can't put on makeup or change clothes on the spot. You need to present the content of the topic through your own performance."

Jenna wasn't nervous at all, but rather slightly excited.

As an apprentice at the Théâtre de l'Ancienne Cage à Pigeons, she had dreamed of such performance opportunities countless times.

She lowered her head to look at the topic and couldn't help but smile.

She had life experience in being "coquettish".

She lowered her head to look at the topic and couldn't help but smile.
She had life experience in being "coquettish".
When Jenna raised her head, her eyes were already passionate and bold, as if hiding thousands of words.
The Showy Diva was back on stage!
As her gaze swept over them, both male and female examiners inexplicably felt their hearts tremble.
Halfway through Jenna's performance, some examiners had already started drinking water.
I haven't even used Charm yet... Jenna was proud of her performance.
She hadn't even made any overly vulgar movements.
"Phew..." An interviewer involuntarily let out a breath as Jenna finished her performance.
She asked, "Do you have a boyfriend?"
"Yes," Jenna answered promptly, but didn't mention that she also had a child.
It wasn't mentioned in her resume either. After all, Ludwig's household registration was with Lumian, and she and Lumian weren't married. Unless the Hall Film Company hired private detectives to investigate deeply, they definitely wouldn't find out.
The interviewers couldn't help but exchange glances.
What a great talent, possibly the kind that could outshine others in the future. Why would she already have a boyfriend?
Girl, wake up! You're too young to be in love!
Never mind, once she enters the industry and sees what real luxury is, she'll quickly break up with her previous boyfriend. Before that, just make sure to keep it confidential.
The initial female interviewer withdrew her gaze from her colleagues and said to Jenna,
"We'll get back to you with an answer soon. Um, try not to leave the city for the next three days."
"Alright," Jenna bowed and left the meeting room.
Since this was in the Talent Department, where one might run into big-name stars at any time, there were dedicated staff to escort her out to prevent wandering and unauthorized photos.
The young woman escorting Jenna out of the Talent Department saw that this interviewee was not only beautiful but also had a unique kind of beauty, with great potential to become a big star in the future. Wanting to build a relationship, she started introducing which office belonged to who, and which area was exclusive to whom...
Jenna was also very interested in this, because Lumian had

reminded her to "pay attention to the actor playing Gehrman Sparrow, see if there's anything special about him".
The two chatted happily as they slowly walked towards the exit of the Talent Department.
At this moment, several people came in from outside, led by someone wearing sunglasses, about 1.8 meters tall.
Having already entered the Talent Department, this person took off his sunglasses, revealing a face that Jenna found somewhat familiar.
He looked about 30% similar to Zhou Mingrui, with a smaller head, more delicate features, and more pronounced contours. If Jenna hadn't been specifically looking for traces of Zhou Mingrui on his face, she probably wouldn't have noticed the resemblance.
This was the actor playing Gehrman Sparrow, a mixed-race man named Jia Yu.
Jenna withdrew her gaze with some disappointment.
If Jia Yu himself had looked 60-70% similar to the Gehrman Sparrow he played, or very close to Zhou Mingrui, relying on makeup to become Gehrman Sparrow, then Jenna would have thought he might be somewhat special, a symbol of some key issue in the dream. But now, Jenna thought it was unlikely.
No wonder Franca said there was no need to observe and contact the actor playing Gehrman Sparrow, and Madam Justice didn't mention Jia Yu in the information...
However, Franca's reason was really strange, saying that Jia Yu means 'fake jade', representing that this person is fake, no need to delve deeper. But 'Jia' and 'fake' have completely different meanings. Indeed, only with Franca as a guide can some things become clear at a glance, and some symbols be easily interpreted...
Jenna mused to herself as she passed by Jia Yu and his group.
Those people instinctively turned their heads to look at Jenna's back, seeming to have been struck by her beauty.
After leaving the Talent Department, Jenna asked curiously, "Was that just now Jia Yu?"
The female employee escorting her out nodded.
"Yes, The Great Pirate 3 made him famous overnight."
"Does he have an English name? He looks very much like a foreigner," Jenna asked casually.
If Jia Yu's English name was Klein Moretti, then it would still be worth continuing to observe and make deeper contact.
The female employee thought for a moment and said, "No, he just has some foreign ancestry."
As Jenna was feeling disappointed, the female employee lowered her voice and said,

"Actually, he wasn't initially chosen to play Gehrman Sparrow. We had booked another actor, who was much more famous than him at the time, a real international star."
"Couldn't agree on the price?" Jenna asked.
The female employee shook her head.
"Car accident, became a vegetable."
"Ah?" Jenna was first shocked, then several phrases she had seen while scrolling through videos recently flashed through her mind: Blade flashes, bloody storm, fierce struggle...
"What a pity," the female employee sighed.
Jenna's eyes moved slightly as she asked, "What was that star's name? I haven't heard about the actor being replaced due to a car accident..."
The female employee had a look of reminiscence.
"I can't remember his name either. That incident left a deep impression on me, but I just can't recall the name... It's just on the tip of my tongue..."
"Then I'll look it up myself when I get back." Jenna felt increasingly that there was something off about this matter.
She smiled and waved goodbye, leaving Hall Film Company.
...
At Xinhong District, in the rented apartment.
Lumian received a message from Jenna, informing him about the matters related to the actor playing Gehrman Sparrow.
Lumian received a message from Jenna, informing him about the matters related to the actor playing Gehrman Sparrow.
There was indeed news about a star becoming a vegetable due to a car accident, but whether it was the news itself or the comments below, they were all vague about the name and specific time, as if avoiding something.
Even the almighty internet can't find out who it is... Lumian stood up and started pacing in the living room cum dining room.
He suddenly thought of someone and picked up his phone, finding "A name that leaves a deep impression on you".
"Have you heard of this news? Do you know who it is?"
Below the text converted by the voice input method was the news content that Lumian had copied and pasted.
After a while, Anderson Hood replied to him: "See? If I had turned myself in, who would provide you with intelligence?"
He still hasn't forgotten about last time? Isn't he being a bit petty? Lumian grumbled to himself, then smiled and brought the phone to his mouth: "Then I would help you break out of prison."
After twenty to thirty seconds, Anderson replied: "But I don't want to break out of prison. You don't need to help me go against this

city.
"The star who had the car accident is called An Xiaotian; he's still lying in a special ward at Crimson Moon Hospital."
"An Xiaotian?" Lumian looked towards Anthony.
As Franca would say, everyone with their names beginning with 'An' might have been one family five hundred years ago.
Anthony thought for a few seconds, just as he had an inspiration, Lumian was already muttering to himself, "Antigonus?"
This was one of the five dukes of the Tudor Empire, the previous Fool Uniqueness accommodator.
Thinking of the five dukes of the Tudor Empire, Lumian, who had already encountered three of them in the dream, inexplicably felt a bit more pressure with the lingering aura of the Blood Emperor.
"It's quite fitting with the dream logic for Mr. Fool's manifestation to be played by the previous Fool..." Lumian nodded slowly.
"But having a car accident isn't normal, what does this symbolize?" Anthony said thoughtfully.
"Does it symbolize that the mental imprint left by Antigonus in The Fool Uniqueness is in a vegetative state?" Lumian tried to interpret.
He immediately added, "A more suspicious point about this matter is that Madam Justice didn't mention it in the information.
"Whether An Xiaotian is the dream manifestation corresponding to Antigonus or not, as the originally planned actor for Gehrman Sparrow who had a car accident and became a vegetative patient, Madam Justice should have mentioned it in the information, both emotionally and rationally.
"If he is Antigonus, then we should be instructed to dig deeper into the issue. If not, why not simply explain a few sentences to prevent us from wasting time on this aspect?"
Anthony pondered for a while and said, "Maybe she forgot."
And for the Major Arcana card holders, "forgetting" itself could indicate that there were issues with An Xiaotian's existence.
Lumian, standing, looked at Anthony and said thoughtfully, "Later, you go to Star Dream Provisions Store to retrieve the letter, and write about An Xiaotian's matter in a letter and mail it out.
"I'll find time to go to Crimson Moon Hospital later to 'visit' An Xiaotian."

Chapter 969: Conspirer's Sensitivity

Star Dream Provisions Store.

With Ludwig tagging along, Anthony received the reply letter from the Major Arcana card holders from the shop owner.

"In reality, Rozanne is under strict protection from the Church of Evernight Goddess. As long as she's asleep, there will definitely be Beyonders monitoring her dream state. The Church of Evernight Goddess are experts in this area..."

"On the Future, Frank Lee hasn't shown any more abnormalities so far. He's the same as before. Regarding Li Keji in the dream, our bottom line is that we can't let him be corrupted by the power of the Great Mother, nor can we let him become a puppet of the Celestial Worthy through death and rebirth..."

Reading this, Anthony seemed to hear the inner thoughts of the Major Arcana card holders: "If necessary, you can actively eliminate Li Keji and destroy the body. In any case, we can't let him be corrupted or exploited. Death won't affect the real person in reality."

Lumian thought the same... Anthony hadn't personally witnessed Li Keji's mushrooms, he had only heard Lumian recount the other's ideas, which he found somewhat reasonable but also permeated with bewildering madness.

He continued reading the rest of the letter.

"We can only confirm that Anderson Hood is currently in Anderson, the capital of Lenburg, but we can't find him. We will communicate with the Church of Knowledge later."

The fact that even the Major Arcana card holders from different pathways can't find him proves that Anderson Hood is hiding very well. Perhaps he has even received protection from higher powers... Is the communication with the Church of Knowledge a way to confirm if they had provided help to Anderson Hood? If not, things would be even more complex and troublesome... Anthony folded the letter and stuffed it into his jeans pocket.

He then immediately dropped the letter he had written in advance into the silver-trimmed black mailbox.

...

Tech Building.

Lumian was already at work. While patrolling the floors, he pondered how to more effectively monitor Zaratulstra's situation, and where to go tonight to observe this enemy's state—Lumian wanted to see if Zaratulstra would still encounter hostility in his dreams at night after Luo Shan reminded Zhou Mingrui again, deepening the latter's impression of Zaratulstra.

Reaching the seventh floor, taking advantage of Old Xia's trip to the bathroom, Lumian took out his phone, opened the online shopping platform Franca had mentioned, and typed a few words using voice input: "Pinhole cameras..."

He felt that although Zaratulstra was also suppressed to Sequence 7, he was essentially still an Angel with many mysterious and bizarre abilities. Relying solely on the mirror world to spy on him was obviously unrealistic; this could only be done occasionally.

So, Lumian planned to try scientific methods, to try pinhole cameras and bugs. Even if Zaratulstra later discovered these little devices, as long as he couldn't trace them back to Lumian, there wouldn't be any problem.

After completing the input, Lumian didn't press the "search" button.

He remembered Franca saying this was illegal, part of the black and gray industry.

Let's not even mention whether regular platforms sell these, but as a Child of God, why should I personally get involved in the black and gray industry? I'm a law-abiding citizen... Lumian half-jokingly, half-mockingly closed the app and switched to WeChat, entering the conversational window with "Intis Group Grimm".

He calmly input: "Prepare some pinhole cameras and bugs for me, preferably with user manuals.

"Also, give me Zaratulstra's itinerary for the next two days."

Zaratulstra's safety in the dream city was jointly managed by his personal bodyguards and the Intis Group's security department, so Lumian knew last night that Zaratulstra was most likely at the hotel, and headed straight there to observe the situation. Of course, this wasn't entirely certain; Zaratulstra could change his itinerary at any time. He was the one in control, just like when he suddenly decided to visit two tutoring centers, Lumian hadn't received any warning from Grimm beforehand.

"Alright." Grimm quickly replied to Lumian.

By the time Lumian finished patrolling the floors and returned to his office, opening the drawer that belonged to him, he immediately saw two sets of pinhole cameras and bugs quietly placed inside.

Lumian pulled out the paper placed on top of them and memorized Zaratulstra's itinerary from 5 pm to 10pm today.

As the sky approached complete darkness, he found an excuse to go to the bathroom and teleported away.

He first used the mirror world to hide the pinhole cameras and bugs in inconspicuous places in Zaratulstra's room, erased traces of his presence, and completed anti-divination using Mirror

Substitution. Then he returned to the Tech Building and arrived at Mr. Huang's exclusive 16th floor through the mirror.
Tonight, Mr. Huang would host a business dinner here to entertain Zaratulstra and his entourage.
Lumian was very grateful for Mr. Huang's fondness for mirrors and gold foil decorations, which allowed him to easily find the best position to observe Zaratulstra from behind a mirror-like object on the ceiling.
The elderly man had just toasted a glass of red wine with Mr. Huang and appeared completely normal, while outside the window it was truly night.
Time ticked by, and Lumian quietly watched them drink wine, eat, and chat casually.
Suddenly, Mr. Huang leaned back in his chair, raised his head, and as if pondering a question, cast his gaze towards the mirror-like object where Lumian was hiding.
Lumian instinctively withdrew his body, moving away from the mirror surface.
Did Mr. Huang sense me?
Can he detect spying from behind mirrors?
He's just a dream projection, not Emperor Roselle... Was that just a pure coincidence just now, or in Mr. Fool's subconscious cognition, is Mr. Huang hiding Beyonder powers? Thinking of this, Lumian suddenly remembered a piece of information Franca had told him: Louis Gustav of the Emperor faction has been very irritable lately because he couldn't contact a key figure, and that key figure was suspected to be the mirrored Emperor Roselle.
There's a whiff of conspiracy... Lumian's Conspirer's intuition immediately gave him a suspicion: Could it be that the mirrored Emperor Roselle has also entered the dream?
She had previously cooperated with the subordinates of evil gods and Celestial Worthy, did She enter the dream with the help of the Celestial Worthy's side? After all, She's not a true god, hasn't accommodated the Uniqueness, and doesn't have special items, so it's unlikely She could come in on Her own...
Is She working with Zaratulstra, attempting to erode and influence Emperor Roselle's dream manifestation, Huang Tao, until they control and replace him?
She is essentially a Mirror People, so it's only natural that She can detect someone spying from behind mirrors...
If She and Zaratulstra control the Intis Group, given the Group's influence and terrifying cash flow, the balance of victory will surely tilt rapidly!
While we focused on Zhou Mingrui, Li Keji, and An Xiaotian,

Zaratulstra quietly raided our vault...
Normally, given that Princess Bernadette seems to still be able to enter the dream, Mr. Huang should be on our side...
But why did Mr. Huang so obviously look in my direction?
She could have pretended not to notice and waited for an opportunity to suddenly attack...
The more Lumian thought about it, the more he felt cold sweat breaking out on his back.
Zaratulstra isn't a Conspirer, but he's as good as one!
Indeed, my initial idea wasn't wrong—we should actively attack, assassinate him, or trade one for one, kick him out... As these thoughts raced through Lumian's mind, he pressed against the mirror surface again, looking down.
At this time, Mr. Huang had already withdrawn his gaze.
But Zaratulstra noticed his previous behavior and glanced at the ceiling, asking, "What were you looking at?"
Mr. Huang gently swirled the red wine in his glass and smiled, answering, "Thinking about some things."
Zaratulstra didn't ask further and started talking about other matters.
Lumian observed for several more minutes, confirming that Zaratulstra showed no abnormalities after nightfall.
In other words, after being punished once, Mr. Fool's subconscious will consider this person completely marionettized. Even if Zhou Mingrui hears the corresponding name again, deepening his impression, it won't alert the dream's subconscious, unless Zaratulstra does something new to stimulate him, bringing new changes? Lumian speculated about the reasons for the current situation as he left using Mirror Traversal.
"What took you so long?" Old Xia casually asked when he saw him walk back into the office.
Lumian sighed and said, "Ah, I'm the kind of person who gets diarrhea when I eat excessively spicy stuff, and gets constipated when I don't eat spicy food."
Old Xia enthusiastically started chatting about the topic of "spicy food".
...
Late at night, Lumian teleported to the vicinity of Crimson Moon Hospital, continuously flashing between the glass windows of different special wards through the mirror world.
After a minute, he stopped.
Before him was a dark hospital room with only a bit of moonlight, and his spiritual intuition told him that the person in the room was An Xiaotian, whom he was looking for.

Lumian looked down at the hospital bed from above and saw a person connected to many machines and tubes.
The person's head was immersed in darkness, only vaguely showing decent facial features, but the beard seemed to have been only trimmed short due to not being shaved for a long time, growing up to just below the cheeks, thick and black, in tufts.
Lumian observed for a while, then walked out of the glass window and approached the bedside.
He saw that the comatose patient's head was shaved bald, with multiple suture marks on top that looked like giant centipedes.
A scene spontaneously formed in Lumian's mind: the head forcibly split open, the brain violently extracted, then something unknown placed in the emptied space before suturing shut...
A symbol? Just as this thought flashed through Lumian's mind, he saw on the monitor that the heartbeat became intense, with peaks and valleys rapidly alternating, bringing a beeping alarm sound.
Lumian instinctively stepped back, moving to the window, ready to leave at any moment.
At the same time, he saw that all of the patient's monitoring data had changed, becoming very active.
As soon as I arrive, there's an anomaly? Is it caused by something on me... There are too many possible reasons, I don't even know which one it could be... Lumian once again turned his gaze to the patient himself.
The patient's fingers suddenly moved imperceptibly.

Chapter 970: Linkage

In the dark hospital room lit only by a bit of moonlight, Lumian saw An Xiaotian, who had been in a vegetative state for over a year, move his fingers ever so slightly.

While surprised, Lumian wasn't afraid. Instead, he smiled.

An anomaly is good; anomalies reveal more information!

How could I interpret the secrets hidden in this matter if there were no changes?

Lumian leaned against the window, staring at An Xiaotian on the hospital bed, waiting for more anomalies.

An Xiaotian's fingers moved again.

The darkness in the room seemed to deepen.

Lumian's gaze suddenly turned to the doorway of the hospital room.

The door opened silently, and a nurse wearing a white cap entered.

Lumian didn't immediately teleport away, but hid in the shadow cast by the curtains.

He saw the nurse, with a blank expression, busily moving around the bed, sometimes adjusting equipment, sometimes changing IV bags, but her hands were always empty, and there was nothing currently hanging on the IV stand.

Through the open door, Lumian noticed that the dimly lit corridor was suddenly filled with more than a dozen people.

There were nurses pushing empty carts, women in patient gowns walking back and forth, men walking while moving their arms, as lively as if it were midday.

But it was late at night, and they weren't making any sound, their faces completely devoid of expression.

Lumian thought for a moment, then deliberately walked out of the shadows.

The nurse busying herself by An Xiaotian's side didn't even glance at him, as if he were just a patch of air.

Lumian walked out of the hospital room at a leisurely pace, placing himself among the coming and going nurses and patients.

When the man moving his arms was about to bump into him, he naturally sidestepped Lumian, never looking at him.

Lumian stood with his hands in his pockets, watching them as if they were in different worlds.

The nurse pushing the empty treatment cart turned and walked straight towards Lumian.

Just as they were about to collide, the nurse suddenly stopped, opened her mouth, and said one word, "Be..."

Her voice abruptly cut off, and she walked around Lumian with a

blank expression.
Behind her was the female patient who had been walking. She also came up to Lumian and began to speak, "Care..."
Be, care? Be careful of what? Lumian's spirits lifted, feeling that this trip hadn't been in vain.
The female patient also only said one word before walking around Lumian. Behind her was another nurse.
Just as that nurse opened her mouth, Lumian suddenly heard a buzzing sound.
The already dimmed lights at the end of the corridor began to flicker, alternating rapidly between bright and dark.
Almost simultaneously, Lumian felt a sense of being rejected by his surroundings, an uncomfortable feeling of being about to be squeezed out.
He saw the nurse in front of him rapidly step backward, the female patient who had just walked around him retreated to his front, then continued backing up.
In this way, the scenes Lumian had previously witnessed and the events he had experienced began to rapidly rewind, as if he had accidentally clicked a corresponding button while watching surveillance footage.
A strong fear suddenly erupted in Lumian's heart, which even the endurance of an Ascetic couldn't suppress.
He felt that if he stayed here any longer, he would encounter something terribly frightening, and might even be directly locked onto by that Celestial Worthy, after which he would no longer have the chance to come to the dream city!
Without hesitation, he activated the black mark on his right shoulder and disappeared from the hospital ward corridor.
Lumian's teleportation destination wasn't the rented apartment in Xinhong District, but the entrance of Star Dream Provisions Store.
At this time, Star Dream Provisions Store was already closed, but not far away was the Dream City Police Department, with quite a few rooms in the corresponding building still lit up.
Lumian calmly examined his own feelings and found that the fear was rapidly receding, and the uncomfortable sense of being rejected by his surroundings was gone.
Is it an anomaly, or rather, a gaze directed at that area? There's no problem once I leave?
Those nurses and patients were being controlled by An Xiaotian in his vegetative state, trying to tell me something, which resulted in triggering an anomaly in the dream?
What he wanted to tell me must be crucial, to have triggered such a dramatic change, not giving him any chance to continue... If

Franca were to find Zhou Mingrui at night and try to tell him everything in detail, it would probably be like just now, only getting started before being forcibly rewound or kicked out of the dream...
What exactly was An Xiaotian trying to warn me about... be careful of whom?
There were too many potential subjects to guess, and Lumian couldn't find a train of thought for the moment.
He felt it necessary to "contact" An Xiaotian again, but the prerequisite was to find a way to bypass the restrictions and let him say at least two more words.
If the information An Xiaotian wanted to convey was crucial, Lumian wouldn't be stingy with the number of times he could be kicked out of the dream. Even if future opportunities would be consumed one by one, he was willing to do it.
It's no big deal if I'm completely kicked out; I still have teammates.
As long as we can get the crucial information, sacrificing myself is very worthwhile.
I must have trust in my teammates!
...
Late at night, in Room 2303 in Dechuang Garden.
Franca was awakened by the vibration of her phone.
She picked it up and saw that it was a voice call request from "The Idiot".
Uh... Before Franca could answer, Lumian had already hung up and sent a message instead.
The reason he did this was that messages and voice call records could be deleted using the Information Shredder, while the content of voice calls couldn't and might be monitored.
Glancing at the awakened Jenna, Franca began to read Lumian's message carefully.
As she read, Franca's expression changed.
She lowered her voice and said, "Mr. Huang might be problematic... "While Zaratulstra has been seemingly trying to contact Zhou Mingrui lately, he's actually using the mirrored Roselle to erode and influence Mr. Huang... That's so damn insidious!"
Jenna leaned over and finished reading Lumian's message.
She also couldn't help but frown. "If Mr. Huang sides with the Celestial Worthy, things will get complicated..."
"It's more than just complicated. With people, money, and influence at their disposal, what can we even do? Should we take Zhou Mingrui to rent a place near the police station, where Mr. Huang can't influence those jobs?" The more Franca thought about it, the more her head ached. "How can we confirm whether Mr.

Huang is showing any abnormalities? If he suddenly announces that he's had gender reassignment surgery, does that mean he's been completely controlled by the mirrored Roselle?"
Jenna thought for a moment and then said, "If Mr. Huang is really controlled and can't be saved, we can sacrifice one person to kill Mr. Huang and let Bernie Huang become the CEO of the Intis Group."
"Good idea..." Franca's mouth twitched slightly, "If Mr. Huang is really controlled, it means he's the mirrored Roselle, a Beyonder with an Angel-level Sequence, and moreover, he has Zaratulstra's help and powerful security personnel protecting him. It would be difficult for the four of us to assassinate him together, let alone just one person going to do it..."
At this point, Franca tried to find humor in the grim situation.
"Besides, Bernie Huang has two younger brothers, it's not certain that she would inherit the CEO position..."
As she spoke, Franca suddenly froze.
She and Jenna exchanged glances, their eyes lighting up as they blurted out simultaneously, "Bernie Huang!"
The best candidate to confirm whether Mr. Huang has shown any abnormalities was Bernie Huang!
By solely relying on Franca and Jenna, unless they forcibly infiltrated and secretly observed, it would be a matter of luck whether they could even encounter Mr. Huang, let alone test him.
"How do we contact Bernie Huang and persuade her?" Franca's first reaction was to find Luo Shan and ask if she had Bernie Huang's phone number or WeChat.
As her eyes moved, Franca's smile blossomed, her face full of pride.
"I have an idea!"
"What idea?" Jenna asked expectantly.
Franca cleared her throat and replied, "The one we should be looking for isn't Bernie Huang, but Bernadette.
"We'll write to the Major Arcana card holders tomorrow, asking them to contact Queen Mystic. If Bernadette still has a chance to enter the dream, she will naturally come to handle it. We don't need to persuade her or instigate her.
"The dream world and the real world, online and offline, can be linked!"
Jenna nodded slowly and said, "If Queen Mystic can no longer come in, we'll then consider how to contact and Instigate Bernie Huang."
"We can formulate the plan now." Franca was no longer sleepy.
Jenna thought seriously for a few seconds and said, "This matter is very important. I think we shouldn't wait until tomorrow to write

the letter. I'll actively leave the dream now and tell the Major Arcana card holder on duty in the villa about Mr. Huang's problem."
Franca fell into a brief contemplative silence before replying, Franca pondered for a moment and said, "Alright, it's not frequent entry and exit from the dream, just an occasional instance. There shouldn't be any problems, and it won't affect the number of times we can be kicked out of the dream."
Jenna immediately changed her posture to sit up.
In her current situation, she couldn't rely on the dream's rejection to actively leave, so she had to use Cogitation to enter that state of emptying her thoughts, then imagine herself jumping from a high place.
In the sensation of weightless free fall, Jenna suddenly woke up.
She opened her eyes, got out of bed, and confirmed whether she had returned to reality.
Then, she went out the door and down the stairs.
Tonight, the one guarding them in the living room was Madam Justice, wearing a white dress with gold decorations.
"Is there an emergency?" Madam Justice stood up and asked.
Without Jenna needing to emphasize further, she already knew the seriousness of the issue.
Jenna nodded and recounted Lumian's guesses, Franca's intelligence, and Zaratulstra's recent interactions with Huang Tao.
Madam Justice nodded slightly. "We will contact Queen Mystic immediately."
She raised her right hand and quickly sketched a small bird in midair.
The bird was transparent and dreamlike. It chirped a few times, circled around and descended towards Madam Justice, entering her body and disappearing without a trace.
"This is a dream messenger I made. It can travel to specific targets through the collective unconscious sea," Madam Justice briefly explained.
She paused, then continued, "Since you've returned to reality, I'll tell you about An Xiaotian directly.
"At that time, I had already been kicked out of the dream once and started planning to shoot 'The Great Pirate 3'. This was not only because I wanted to present Gehrman Sparrow's experiences to Mr. Fool's dream manifestation, trying to awaken his memories and make him wake up, but also because I was exploring how to realize a sentence Mr. Fool had told us: 'The awakening of The World spells The Fool's return.'"

Chapter 971: Past Events

"The awakening of The World spells The Fool's return..."

Jenna had seen this sentence in the materials provided by the Major Arcana card holders. It was considered the most important revelation made by Mr. Fool before he fell into slumber, concealing the direction to awaken him.

The Fool—Sequence 0 of the Seer pathway—was said to have authority over fate!

Jenna looked at Madam Justice without asking questions, waiting for her to continue.

Madam Justice pointed to the sofa area. "Let's sit down and talk."

After they each chose a sofa, Madam Justice began speaking in a gentle voice, "After our initial intelligence gathering in the dream city, we discovered a problem:

"There was no dream manifestation corresponding to Gehrman Sparrow.

"Among Mr. Fool's avatars, Klein Moretti's dream manifestation was merged with Zhou Mingrui. This can be seen from Zhou Mingrui's brother being called Benson Zhou and his sister Zhou Sasa, corresponding to Klein Moretti's real-life brother Benson and sister Melissa.

"Other manifestations, like the private detective and the wandering magician, could be found in the dream city, but they were scattered among multiple people. They either used half of their names or only exhibited corresponding characteristics."

Hearing this, Jenna nodded slightly.

These had all been mentioned in the materials, and their team had also secretly observed the corresponding manifestations, planning to make deeper contact with them in turn.

Madam Justice smiled with a sigh.

"We've confirmed those dream manifestations, and there were no issues or anything we could exploit.

"But Gehrman Sparrow, as one of Mr. Fool's two most important manifestations and The World mentioned in that revelation, had no corresponding manifestation in the dream city.

"At the time, this raised strong suspicions and made us a bit excited.

"It's not a problem if there are issues; it's a problem if everything is normal.

"After discussion, we decided to try to create the character of Gehrman Sparrow in the dream city. Only with Gehrman Sparrow could we talk about awakening The World."

Jenna listened with both surprise and excitement.

This approach was something they hadn't thought of before.
Of course, this was mainly because they had just finished observing important characters and were still experimenting with the results of different levels of contact with different characters. They hadn't yet compiled the intelligence or sought ways to awaken Mr. Fool.
Lumian had made some associations from the phrase "The awakening of The World spells The Fool's return," which was why he had Jenna apply for a job at Hall Film Company to observe the actor playing Gehrman Sparrow more closely.
What they hadn't realized was that filming "The Great Pirate 3" not only included the idea of stimulating Zhou Mingrui and awakening his memories, but also aimed to create the dream manifestation of Gehrman Sparrow out of thin air!
Madam Justice continued, "Our first attempt was to use my Dreamweaver ability and Hall Group's resources to directly create Gehrman Sparrow's dream manifestation and give him real identity proof and past experiences. The result was, well, I got kicked out of the dream.
"I got my gold coin from Madam Reinette, and later returned it to Her. She had already been kicked out three times before I entered the dream city.
"Being kicked out of the dream didn't discourage me. I even felt excited, believing this might truly be a meaningful direction. Otherwise, the Celestial Worthy wouldn't have turned His gaze to this place far from Zhou Mingrui.
"We started our second attempt, with Madam Magician using her identity as a, um, bestselling novelist to write 'The Great Pirate 3'."
"Was 'The Great Pirate 3' also deliberately written by you guys?" Jenna asked thoughtfully.
Madam Justice smiled in a way that made Jenna's eyes light up.
"Haven't you watched 'The Great Pirate 1' and 'The Great Pirate 2'? They tell stories about pirates, but the character Gehrman Sparrow doesn't appear. In other words, before Madam Magician personally wrote 'The Great Pirate 3', the dream manifestation of Gehrman Sparrow didn't exist even in the story.
"The completion and publication of 'The Great Pirate 3' also resulted in Madam Magician being kicked out of the dream.
"We felt we were on the right track, so I used Hall Film Company to purchase the film and television rights for 'The Great Pirate 3' and began preparations for filming."
It's great to have money... Jenna couldn't help but sigh.
For their small team, forget about filming a movie about Gehrman Sparrow, they couldn't even afford to buy the rights to 'The Great

Pirate 3' without winning the lottery who knows how many times.
Madam Justice reminisced. "I personally served as the producer and personally selected the actor to play Gehrman Sparrow.
"Then, I discovered An Xiaotian. He was an actor and a star. It was such a coincidence, as if Mr. Fool had secretly set it up, waiting for us to trigger it.
"An Xiaotian's backstory in the dream was that he was an orphan, raised by his older sister. He dropped out after high school and entered the entertainment industry.
"His sister fell seriously ill and is currently in a vegetative state. To maintain hope for his sister's awakening, he worked hard to become a big star and earned quite a bit of money.
"I extended an invitation to him, offering a salary he couldn't refuse.
"At the time, I was actually a bit uneasy, wondering if having An Xiaotian play Gehrman Sparrow would cause any problems. You know, An Xiaotian corresponds to Antigonus in reality, who was The Half-Fool in the Fourth Epoch and hasn't perished yet. If we merged His spiritual imprint with the movie image of Gehrman Sparrow, it could potentially affect Mr. Fool's self-awareness or benefit Antigonus and that Celestial Worthy.
"To ensure there were no issues, we contacted Antigonus through the Church of Evernight Goddess. He told us we could try."
"Does Antigonus have close ties with the Church of Evernight Goddess? Can He be trusted?" Jenna asked instinctively.
Madam Justice's smile became somewhat complex.
"Being captured and imprisoned is also a kind of connection, I suppose...
"However, after the Goddess provided a revelation and promised Antigonus one thing, He began working for the Church of Evernight Goddess. His words are quite credible now.
"That's why I ultimately decided to invite An Xiaotian to play Gehrman Sparrow.
"On the day of the shoot, An Xiaotian had a very serious car accident and also became a vegetable."
Also... both he and his sister became vegetables... Jenna found it tragic.
"At the same time, that also caused me to be kicked out of the dream for the second time," Madam Justice said in a self-mocking tone. "Afterwards, I faced significant restrictions. By the time I entered the dream for the third time, Holly had already chosen the actor to play Gehrman Sparrow. The silver lining was that she decided to personally fund and establish a foundation to fully cover the medical expenses for An Xiaotian and his sister."

Jenna vaguely felt that Madam Justice was praising her own dream manifestation—Holly—for being a decent person, living up to her ideal image, but she didn't dare to say it too clearly.
Madam Justice skipped over this topic and said directly, "I couldn't find anyone more suitable to play Gehrman Sparrow, and the medicine provided by Mr. Moon couldn't wake up An Xiaotian. I had no choice but to let Jia Yu give it a try. Unfortunately, after Jia Yu finished filming, he couldn't merge with the manifestation of Gehrman Sparrow, and the movie didn't make Zhou Mingrui remember anything. It only created some character imitators of Gehrman Sparrow.
"Perhaps when An Xiaotian had the car accident, the goal that 'The Great Pirate 3' was meant to achieve was destined to fail.
"During the filming of 'The Great Pirate 3', I actually noticed that people were gradually forgetting An Xiaotian, no longer remembering this person, only able to recall related events.
"I wasn't affected, but I also gave myself psychological suggestions not to forget An Xiaotian.
"When I was in the dream city, I indeed remembered, until I was kicked out for the third time..."
Feels like you were somewhat Fooled... Jenna thought for a few seconds and said, "There might still be very useful secrets hidden in relation to An Xiaotian, which is why the Celestial Worthy would Fool everyone and make them forget about him."
"That's our guess too." Madam Justice nodded.
Jenna then said, "An Xiaotian in his vegetative state seems to want to warn Lumian to be careful of someone. Could you please contact Antigonus again to see if He has dreamed anything in reality or knows something?"
"That's our duty," Madam Justice looked around and said, "Don't rush back. Wait for the feedback from the Church of Evernight Goddess. It might come very soon, and you can take this opportunity to deepen your psychological recognition of reality, to avoid confusing reality and dreams in the end."
"Alright," Jenna politely nodded, stood up, and walked towards the garden at the back of the villa.
She wanted to take a walk there.
...
3 am.
When Franca saw Jian Na, who had fallen asleep at some point, suddenly wake up, she understood that the real Jenna had returned.
Jenna lowered her voice and recounted in detail what Madam Justice had said to Franca. Finally, she said, "Antigonus said He can

sense Mr. Fool's dream, but He hasn't entered it and doesn't want to, so He doesn't know what the vegetative An Xiaotian wants to warn Lumian about."
"Is it possible to ask Antigonus to come in once, using the vegetative An Xiaotian? That way, He might know what An Xiaotian wants to warn about," Franca said thoughtfully.
Jenna shook her head. "After An Xiaotian became a vegetable, Antigonus can't come in even if He wants to."
"Do we need to find a way to treat An Xiaotian?" Franca mused to herself, "If we cure him and wake him up, there's no need for Antigonus to come in...
"But how to treat him? Medicine doesn't seem to work..."
After a pause, Franca and Jenna simultaneously thought of a possibility: Great Mother!
And Lumian was now disguised as the Great Mother's Child of God.

Chapter 972: Demoness's Method

"Treat An Xiaotian by finding a bestowed of the Great Mother through Lumian?" Franca's thoughts began to wander, gradually becoming more far-fetched. "If that doesn't work, then have An Xiaotian conceive a child, with the child replacing the father, becoming the father, and help that child grow rapidly, one day surpassing others' ten years..."

Jenna remained silent for a few seconds before saying, "With everyone suppressed at Sequence 7, the Great Mother's bestowed probably can't make embryos form quickly or children grow rapidly. They're even hoping to rely on the Child of God's godhood to make Li Keji go through the pregnancy and childbirth process in one month.

"Moreover, if the Great Mother takes the opportunity to corrupt An Xiaotian or his child, symbolically speaking, the severity of the problem might not be less than the Celestial Worthy awakening."

Franca sighed and replied, "Indeed, but there's no other way. If we could wake An Xiaotian up and reshoot 'The Great Pirate 3', it might have unexpected effects."

Jenna tersely acknowledged. "Madam Justice said that ever since An Xiaotian became a vegetable and 'The Great Pirate 3' changed its lead actor, the filming became normal. She suspects that from that moment on, the true goal this movie was meant to achieve was destined to fail.

"Unfortunately, at present, there's no hope of An Xiaotian waking up, and we can't find anyone more suitable to play Gehrman Sparrow."

Franca opened her mouth, showing a thoughtful expression. "Actually, there's a better candidate, someone more suitable than An Xiaotian to play Gehrman Sparrow."

"Who?" Jenna asked in surprise.

The Major Arcana card holders hadn't discovered such a person?

Franca's eyes curved slightly as she smiled. "Zhou Mingrui."

"..." Jenna felt a bit stupid.

Is that even allowed?

What would you call this? Having Zhou Mingrui play Zhou Mingrui, letting Zhou Mingrui awaken Zhou Mingrui!

Franca said seriously, "If Zhou Mingrui plays Gehrman Sparrow, he could relive the life he's forgotten during the filming process. He might actually remember something and eventually immerse himself in the role, becoming one with the character. Wouldn't that be equivalent to The World awakening?"

At this point, Franca smacked her lips. "But the difficulty is too

high. We don't have the money to reshoot 'The Great Pirate 3', nor can we convince Hall Film Company. If they were to shoot anything, it would be 'The Great Pirate 4', not Gehrman Sparrow's maritime adventure story.
"Even if you became a top star in the entertainment industry and actively proposed reshooting this movie, and even if someone invested, convincing Zhou Mingrui to film would be extremely difficult. Not to mention his personal willingness, I estimate that as soon as the invitation is extended, the relevant person would be kicked out of the dream. Whoever dares to discuss this matter would be kicked out."
"This can be considered as an alternative plan for future awakening actions..." Jenna felt a headache coming on as she thought about the troubles Franca mentioned.
Franca nodded thoughtfully. "Correspondingly, Zhou Mingrui's memories don't seem to be erased. As long as he knows about being asked to film 'The Great Pirate 3' and is interested and willing to try, the Celestial Worthy probably can't directly prevent it. For this, we can sacrifice multiple members' chances to enter the dream multiple times..."
At this point, Franca suddenly smiled. "What do you call this? It's called 'For the sake of saving the world, please debut Mr. Fool!'"
"The Celestial Worthy might not be able to directly prevent it, but subsequently, there might be incidents like the director having a car accident, the film crew experiencing a fire, or the female lead's reputation collapsing, preventing 'The Great Pirate 3' from even entering the filming process," Jenna calmly reminded.
Franca sighed. "I know, this is just proposing an idea. We'll see if it's feasible later."
...
The next afternoon, in the administrative department of the Tech Building.
Franca was busy making charts when she suddenly saw Luo Shan, who had just been called to the HR department, return with a dejected and confused expression.
"What's wrong?" Franca stopped typing.
Luo Shan spoke as if in a dream. "They want to fire me.
"HR said that Mr. Huang passed by earlier, saw me slacking off, and got very angry. He plans to fire me directly...
"I-I haven't even finished paying off my mortgage..."
What kind of reason is this? There are at least seventeen or eighteen people in the administrative department who slack off more than Luo Shan, why fire only her? Franca's first reaction was to help Luo Shan seek justice.

Her second reaction was: Dammit, is this Mr. Huang's purge of Zhou Mingrui's friends?
Has the mirrored Roselle completed initial control over Mr. Huang?
Has Zaratulstra targeted Luo Shan because of her previous warning to Zhou Mingrui?
If Luo Shan doesn't commute with me, the Mirror Substitution won't be able to work, unless Jenna follows her all the time, but Jenna might soon receive a contract from Hall Film Company...
This way, Luo Shan would be in danger...
Before Franca could comfort Luo Shan and think of a countermeasure, she heard her phone vibrate.
She picked it up and saw it was a friend request on WeChat.
The requester was: "Bernadette."
Queen Mystic has arrived? Talk about a stroke of luck! Franca quickly accepted the request, then said to Luo Shan, "Don't worry, there aren't many people working in the administrative department anyway. When Mr. Ed comes, you can plead your case to him, and he should be able to persuade Mr. Huang.
"If that doesn't work, try to negotiate for higher severance pay."
And I will seek justice for you from Miss Huang!
"Mm-hmm." Luo Shan walked back to her desk, dejectedly waiting for Mr. Ed to appear.
Meanwhile, Franca received a message from Bernadette: "Come to Room 101 on the 8th floor."
8th floor? That doesn't belong to any of the Intis Group companies... However, according to Lumian's interpretation, the companies on those floors symbolize the erosion and influence of different secret organizations and evil god cults on Intis, including Queen Mystic's Element Dawn... Franca stood up, didn't say anything to Deputy Director Zhang Qing, and used going to the bathroom as an excuse to leave the administrative department and take the elevator down to the 8th floor.
Half of the 8th floor belonged to Dawn Children's Publishing Company. The receptionist didn't even glance at Franca, allowing her to enter.
Franca found that the facial recognition access control wasn't activated, and no employees came out along the way, allowing her to easily reach Room 101.
Bernie Huang, wearing a spaghetti strap top with fringes at the hem and long jeans, sat in the sofa area, exuding a youthful aura.
This is the college student version of Queen Mystic... Franca walked over, greeted her, and sat down.
"What happened?" Bernie Huang's demeanor and posture were different from that of a college student.

Franca recounted how Mr. Huang seemed to be able to sense the gaze from within the mirror, how the mirrored Roselle in the real world appeared to be missing, and how Zaratulstra had been spending several hours with Mr. Huang every day recently.
Finally, she mentioned the trouble Luo Shan had encountered.
Bernie Huang listened quietly, then nodded gently.
"Regarding my father, I will observe and probe. This will take some time, maybe a few days, maybe a week or two.
"As for Luo Shan's problem, you'll have to solve it yourselves. If I intervene on Luo Shan's behalf, it could easily expose my connection with you.
"If you can resolve Luo Shan's trouble, at least prevent her from entering the handover process for a week, I'll give you a reward."
Isn't this our business? *Why are you still paying me as a reward?*
It's me asking for your help, not you asking for mine... Franca instantly recalled the Star Dream Provisions Store incident and roughly understood that Queen Mystic was finding reasons and excuses to give money to her and the others.
"Alright," Franca agreed immediately.
After leaving Room 101, on her way back upstairs, she seriously considered how to prevent Luo Shan from being fired.
Instigate Mr. Ed to plead on her behalf? That only has a certain chance of success...
Make Mr. Huang's decision to fire Luo Shan disappear? I can't do that, but I can find a way to delay it for a few days...
Pursue both approaches simultaneously...
Franca, always capable of thinking out of the box, took out her phone and told Lumian her ideas and the potential aftermath issues.
Soon, she received a reply from The Idiot: "Plausible."
Franca immediately deleted the chat history using the Information Shredder and then returned to the administrative department.
When Mr. Ed entered his office, she stood up and accompanied Luo Shan to plead their case, spreading mystical pathogens along the way.
Yes, she was going to spread a disease.
She chose mystical pathogens that gave people a chance to get some sick leave, something they could recover quickly upon returning home!
Mystical pathogens that caused stomach flu!
After nearly ten minutes, Franca discreetly Instigated Mr. Ed, making him agree to plead on Luo Shan's behalf.
After the two left the director's office, they saw many colleagues looking pale, vomiting into nearby trash cans, while others rushed

to the bathrooms on different floors.
"What's wrong?" Luo Shan asked a colleague with concern.
The male colleague, holding his stomach, said, "I don't know, everyone suddenly started vomiting and having diarrhea. Could it be food poisoning?"
Seeing this, Franca urgently called the police and dialed the emergency number for Crimson Moon Hospital.
While the administrative department staff waited for the ambulances and other department staff came to help, Franca covered her mouth and started dry heaving.
"I've been affected too..." she said to Luo Shan.
Luo Shan assessed her own physical condition. "I feel it a little, but I'm okay."
Soon, ambulances from Crimson Moon Hospital arrived and took the affected administrative department staff to the hospital.
The entire administrative department was suddenly left with only four people, one of whom was Luo Shan.
Mr. Ed looked at Luo Shan, his expression grave, and said, "You hold down the fort for now. Don't worry about the firing."
"Okay." Luo Shan was both confused and bewildered.
From earlier, Lumian, as a security guard, had been running up and down, helping the administrative department staff go to Crimson Moon Hospital.
During this process, he found an opportunity to get close to Franca, and they exchanged a glance.
As agreed, Lumian spread the mystical pathogen causing stomach flu to Franca, in case she went to the hospital later and nothing was found, making her a suspect.
"How did they get food poisoning?" Old Xia looked at the departing vehicles and asked confusedly, "Everyone ate at the same cafeteria, didn't they? Did they order some unclean takeout?"
"Who knows," Lumian said as he turned to walk back, receiving a message from Franca.
The message read: "You can go check out the administrative department. Those who can still maintain some health and continue working are likely to be Beyonders, like Luo Shan."

Chapter 973: An Unexpected Visitor

When Lumian arrived at the administrative department, several professionals were already there collecting physical evidence for analysis, including but not limited to leftover milk tea, liquid from the water dispenser, discarded takeout containers, vomit, and swabs from computers, desks, and air conditioning vents...

After they finished, another group of specialists began a full disinfection process.

During this time, Luo Shan and the other administrative staff who were still working could only wait in the hallway.

At a glance, Lumian noticed that besides Mr. Ed and Luo Shan, only two people seemed unaffected by the mystical pathogen. Their complexion and movements appeared quite normal.

One was a male, relatively tall by Yangdu standards, standing over six feet. The other was a woman in her thirties, with a round face, slightly overweight, not particularly attractive but not ugly either.

They don't seem to be after Mr. Huang... or rather, not after Mr. Huang's body... Why would Beyonders work diligently in the Intis Group's administrative department? Lumian tried to fathom their intentions based on his own thinking.

Of course, he couldn't be certain that there weren't any Beyonders among those who went to Crimson Moon Hospital. Perhaps there was a Demoness waiting for a chance to have a taste of Mr. Huang, but upon sensing the presence and erosion of the mystical pathogen, she feigned severe symptoms and went to the hospital to avoid being discovered?

Luo Shan also noticed the reportedly handsome security guard and felt he lived up to her expectations.

After a while, Mr. Ed received a phone call.

"The problems aren't serious, and the situation has stabilized?" Mr. Ed asked happily.

Then he heard Zhang Qing on the other end say: "The test results show a mild viral infection. The doctor said they can go home after finishing their IV drips, take medication for two more days, rest a bit, and they'll be fine.

"More than a dozen people have already applied for sick leave, planning to stay home for a couple of days to recover. They're also asking if this counts as a work-related injury and if there's any compensation."

Mr. Ed's temple twitched as he suppressed his emotions and said, "They should rest at home. We can't have them forcing themselves to work and risking more serious problems. As for whether it counts as a work-related injury, ask the legal department when

you get back."
"Alright," Zhang Qing said, "But there are also more than a dozen people who say they want to come back to work, however..."
"However what?" Mr. Ed asked.
Zhang Qing replied ambiguously, "They're all the ones who like to dress up, except for Luo Fu."
Even sick beauties were beauties—Mr. Huang might feel sympathetic when he saw them.
Mr. Ed was momentarily speechless.
Is it only the new employees who are eager to work and take their jobs seriously?
Meanwhile, Lumian used the incident in the administrative department as an excuse to keep watch nearby, occasionally offering help.
This was also to guard against Luo Shan being eliminated by the Celestial Worthy's subordinates in the chaos—as a Painter, she had some ability to protect herself, but she clearly lacked experience and could easily let her guard down in crowded situations. Now, with Franca in the hospital, she couldn't rely on Mirror Substitution to escape a first strike.
After Franca returned from Crimson Moon Hospital to help Luo Shan and others deal with the backlog of work, Lumian and Old Xia went back to the security department on the thirteenth floor.
He continued to ponder how to treat An Xiaotian.
He believed that An Xiaotian becoming a vegetable was symbolic, representing the decline and disappearance of Antigonus's spiritual imprint within The Fool's Uniqueness. This couldn't be reversed through normal methods, so he had to seek a solution from the essence.
Find a way to strengthen Antigonus's spiritual imprint within The Fool's Uniqueness? But Antigonus can't enter Mr. Fool's dream now. Even if He's willing to provide the corresponding items, we'd have to corrupt Zhou Mingrui, the symbol of The Fool's Uniqueness, to achieve our goal. This would damage our image in Zhou Mingrui's mind, wasting all our previous efforts, and it's extremely dangerous.
Franca and Jenna's approach isn't wrong. Using the power of the Great Mother might awaken An Xiaotian, but it's not treatment or having An Xiaotian have a child. It's new birth, symbolically meaning that Antigonus's spiritual imprint within The Fool's Uniqueness is reborn. Whether the reborn An Xiaotian is a friend or foe is hard to say, but he would inevitably interfere with Mr. Fool's awakening...
Sequence 7 Heretic Spellmaster of the Villain pathway can perform

rebirth rituals. Theoretically, Great Mother bestowed like Grimm can wake An Xiaotian, but it involves reversing symbolism. I estimate only a rebirth ritual performed by someone with godhood would be effective. In the dream city, Grimm and others believe only I, the fake Child of God, have this, while others don't. Well, there should be another place that has it, the basement of Mushu Hospital, but sending An Xiaotian there would be purely creating an enemy for ourselves...

After pondering for a long time, Lumian felt that both current approaches had significant problems. The hidden dangers and negative impacts far outweighed the gains, and it wasn't something he and his companions would choose.

He began to consider this matter from the perspective of finding loopholes.

Soon, he thought of someone: Li Keji!

Mr. Fool's subconscious understanding of Li Keji's mushrooms should come from Gehrman Sparrow's interactions with Frank Lee.

From what we've seen, he seems to think Li Keji's mushrooms are quite dangerous, with various possibilities, producing some incredible effects.

The essence of this city is a dream, and dreams are idealistic. As long as Mr. Fool truly believes Li Keji's mushrooms can achieve incredible things, Li Keji could create a mushroom to treat An Xiaotian and wake him up!

It's not the mushroom treating An Xiaotian, but Mr. Fool's subconscious being guided to reverse the symbolism.

Of course, that awakening would inevitably be distorted, abnormal, and horrifying, but if An Xiaotian could use this to say everything he wants to warn me, it would be acceptable... The more Lumian thought about it, the more he felt that using Li Keji might be useful.

He planned to find an opportunity to talk with Li Keji through the door of the hospital room.

The original of this biology teacher was really a Doctor!

...

Jenna, who was observing other incarnations corresponding to Mr. Fool, received a call from Hall Film Company, asking her to head over to the talent department tomorrow to sign a manager contract.

Phew... I have a job now too. Jenna breathed a sigh of relief.

She even looked forward to filming movies and TV dramas but felt that the matter of awakening Mr. Fool wouldn't drag on that long, not until she joined a production.

At the same time, she felt that Hall Film Company was managed quite well. She had thought some interviewer would call in advance, hinting that she needed to do something to have a chance at a good contract.
She was prepared to use Charm to make the relevant personnel lose themselves, but nothing happened.
This was different from some things she had seen and heard at the Théâtre de l'Ancienne Cage à Pigeons.
As expected of a film company founded by Madam Justice... Jenna felt relieved.
...
After dark.
Lumian, who knew the target's schedule, took advantage of Zaratulstra's absence from the hotel to cross over from the mirror world and retrieve the surveillance content stored in the pinhole cameras and listening devices.
After midnight, he returned to the rented apartment in Xinhong District and used his phone to play back Zaratulstra's activities in the hotel room.
This wasn't to spy on what Zaratulstra was plotting or planning to accomplish—though that would be a bonus. Lumian's main purpose was to observe Zaratulstra's behavior when alone, to find out how many marionettes he could currently maintain, how often he summoned Historical Void images, how long these images would dissipate on their own, and other such information.
This was preparation for an upcoming surprise attack and encirclement to kill Zaratulstra.
Although Zaratulstra was also suppressed to Sequence 7, he still had an Angel's rank. Many of his abilities' effects and ranges were somewhat different from a true Sequence 7.
Take the number of marionettes, for example. A normal Marionettist who had just advanced to Sequence 5 could only control one marionette. If restricted to Sequence 7 level, theoretically, they wouldn't be able to control marionettes at all, only using marionettization for killing. But this ability might qualitatively change at Sequence 4 and Sequence 2, reducing spirituality consumption and lowering control difficulty. After that, even if the ability was suppressed to Sequence 7, it would still essentially exist, just with less pronounced effects.
In other words, Zaratulstra could still control marionettes, but the number was very limited—perhaps two, perhaps only one. Lumian now needed to confirm these details.
Without grasping the relevant intelligence, if they directly launched a surprise attack and tried to encircle and kill

Zaratulstra, given their superior numbers, they might have some hope of defeating or forcing him to retreat. But achieving their predetermined goal would be almost impossible. The Seer pathway was known for its strong survival abilities!

Lumian stared intently at the phone screen, not missing any detail.

For now, he was skipping through, selecting only scenes with human activity.

When the surveillance video reached 11 pm last night, Lumian saw Zaratulstra, dressed in a black robe, walk to the door and open it.

Someone entered from outside.

The person wore sunglasses even at night, dressed in a black T-shirt and dark jeans that wouldn't attract attention, about six feet tall.

Who could it be? Lumian's focus intensified.

After entering the room, the person looked left and right, then removed the sunglasses perched on their nose, revealing a face quite familiar to Lumian.

He had seen videos of this person being interviewed and participating in certain activities online.

It was Jia Yu, the actor who played Gehrman Sparrow!

He doesn't look too much like Zhou Mingrui, which shouldn't be a problem, so why is he visiting Zaratulstra late at night? *What have we missed?* Lumian's pupils dilated as he watched more intently.

He was grateful for the technology that provided him with assistance, but also worried that Zaratulstra might have already discovered the presence of the pinhole cameras and listening devices, deliberately staging this scene.

Jia Yu sat down in the sofa area and talked with Zaratulstra for nearly fifteen minutes, then stood up and left.

Lumian quickly stopped playing the surveillance video, deciding to first listen to whether the listening device had recorded any dialog during that time period.

Chapter 974: Instigation

Lumian quickly found the conversation between Zaratulstra and Jia Yu. The gist was that Zaratulstra wanted to poach Jia Yu for a newly established film and television company.

This company would be funded by the restructured Intis Group, which would also help pay the penalty for breaking Jia Yu's contract in the final year.

Additionally, Jia Yu would receive a hefty signing bonus, better contract terms, stronger resources, and endorsement deals with Intis Group's luxury goods company.

Lumian raised an eyebrow as he listened.

You're really discussing business cooperation?

Is this what I wanted to hear?

After Zaratulstra's repeated promises, Jia Yu was clearly tempted, saying he'd consider it and give a final answer in two days.

Lumian looked at his phone, hit pause, and replayed the conversation in his mind.

He turned to Anthony at the side of the table and mused, "Two key points:

"One, Jia Yu, the actor who played Gehrman Sparrow, is still useful. The Celestial Worthy's subordinates value him highly and want to bring him under their control, preparing for certain future developments.

"Two, Zaratulstra doesn't actually have much money. He only has an identity and company woven from dreams, which are outside this city and exist only as rumors. He needs the merger and restructuring with Intis Group to turn them into real money and resources. This can be deduced from the fact that all the benefits promised to Jia Yu can only be delivered after Intis Group funds the establishment of the film company, rather than writing an irresistible check on the spot.

"With Beyonder abilities restricted, the importance of money and resources is greatly amplified. I really want to know who won that unclaimed first prize earlier."

At this point, Lumian's expression turned cold.

"Another point we overlooked before is that once Intis Group completes the restructuring with Zaratulstra's company that's part of the plot background, Zaratulstra will gain access to a large amount of resources and money, which is very unfavorable for us.

"And whether or not Mr. Huang has been eroded and controlled by the mirrored Roselle, this merger will proceed. The only difference is whether Zaratulstra's benefits will be substantial or just average. As long as he's willing to compromise and give up some interests,

the merger and restructuring will likely happen."
Anthony nodded slightly and said, "Contacting Zhou Mingrui, doing something in secret, and clearing out some dream characters; using the mirrored Roselle to influence Mr. Huang, eroding and controlling this tycoon; and promoting the merger of the two companies—these are the three main things Zaratulstra has done since coming to Yangdu. Some are overt, some covert, making it easy for us to focus on the first thing and overlook the latter two. By the time we realize it, he may have already created the momentum he needs, vast and unstoppable.
"Is this what an Angel who has lived for one or two thousand years is like?
"However, it's surprising that He knows how to use corporate mergers and acquisitions in the dream city to turn virtual wealth into reality. He doesn't seem like an old fossil at all."
He, Lumian, and Jenna hadn't even thought about this aspect before, nor had Franca, who was just an undergraduate student before her transmigration and had almost no exposure to the business world.
"Did you forget that his current body belongs to another transmigrator?" Lumian suddenly smiled, "The operation to eliminate Zaratulstra must be launched as soon as possible."
"But we need to be wary that it might be a trap to lure us in," Anthony reminded Lumian.
Lumian nodded and stood up. "I'm going to chat with a friend now."
After giving some of the food from his Traveler's Bag to Ludwig, he used Teleportation and Mirror Traversal to arrive at the psychiatric ward of Crimson Moon Hospital.
Li Keji was still confined there.
Lumian changed into a more feminine shirt and loose trousers, transforming back into the appearance of a Demoness of Despair.
He gathered his black hair behind his back, letting it fall naturally, then stepped out of the mirror-like object and gently landed at the door of Li Keji's room.
Knock, knock, knock. Lumian gently tapped on the steel door.
He and Li Keji were on opposite sides of the door, so he couldn't use the Bottle of Fiction to isolate the environment.
After a few seconds, Lumian saw a plump, white mushroom cautiously poke its cap out from behind the iron grate in the upper part of the metal door, then quickly retract.
I really want to throw a Fire of Destruction ball in there... Lumian grumbled as Li Keji's densely hairy face appeared at the window blocked by the iron grate.

"Who are you?" Li Keji asked, instinctively brightening.
"I'm here to rescue you," Lumian replied with a smile.
Li Keji shook his head. "No need, no need, I believe in the law!"
The law doesn't believe in you... Lumian thought to himself.
He took the opportunity to say, "Actually, I want to ask for your help."
"Do you want mushrooms?" Li Keji became excited, "I have many types of mushrooms here..."
He was about to start a lengthy introduction.
Lumian interrupted him. "I've heard about your ideas from someone, but I think they might be a bit too narrow."
"Too narrow?" Li Keji was taken aback.
Lumian nodded solemnly.
"For humans, food is indeed important, but it's not everything for survival.
"Diseases can also cause people to lose their lives prematurely. Haven't you thought about creating more magical mushrooms, each variety capable of treating one or multiple types of diseases?"
"That's too difficult." Li Keji fell into deep thought. "It's impossible to treat diseases by crossbreeding cows, fish, wheat, and mushrooms. Do we need to crossbreed with something else... implant my gene fragments into mushrooms, fusing the genes that produce healing power with the mushrooms? But gene fragments and transgenic technology alone are not enough..."
Lumian's eyelid twitched, and he said sincerely, "I have a friend who became a vegetative state due to a car accident, but I feel he still has a bit of consciousness.
"Can you think of a way to use your mushrooms to cure him, wake him up, but still retain that bit of his own consciousness?"
Li Keji was silent for a few seconds before saying, "Let me think about it. I can't guarantee it will work."
"Alright, I'll come back in a couple of days to hear your answer." Lumian stepped back two paces and disappeared into the shadows by the wall.
Throughout this conversation, he had been using Instigation with a hint of Charm.
...
The next morning, at the talent department of Hall Film Company.
Jenna entered an office, facing one of the female interviewers from before.
"Have a seat." The female interviewer pointed to the sofa area. "Let me introduce myself, I'm Mei Xin, head of the talent department at Hall Film Company. My English name is Christine."
She sat down and said to Jenna, "Before our legal colleague arrives,

let me briefly explain the main terms of the contract.
"Your appearance and acting skills meet our requirements very well. In the industry, our Hall Film Company treats new actors the best. The contract is only for three years, with a monthly base salary of 4,000. You can keep 50% of all your income, including film fees and endorsement fees. We will also provide you with various training and professional makeup artists, and so on.
"The most important point is that the company's resources will be significantly tilted towards our own people.
"Once you've gained fame and have representative works, the contract can be renegotiated at any time to increase your profit-sharing ratio and gain some autonomy. And if this contract expires, we only ask for the right of first refusal for the new contract, under equal conditions..."
Jenna listened attentively, feeling quite involved. Although she didn't expect to stay in the dream city for a year or two, this might be her only chance to sign an actor's contract.
Finally, Mei Xin said, "After signing the contract, we will advance you 30,000 yuan to help you settle in and buy clothes. This amount will be deducted in installments from your future income, without interest."
30,000 yuan right after signing? Jenna didn't hide her change in expression.
Quick! I want to sign now!
With this money, plus the 30,000 yuan fee Bernie Huang gave to Franca yesterday, the team's savings would reach nearly 240,000 yuan. They could rent the magic mirror Arrodes from Star Dream Provisions Store!
Having such a magic mirror to help before launching the operation against Zaratulstra would be a major advantage!
During this time, whenever Lumian and the others visited Star Dream Provisions Store, they would try not to rent the mirror and instead ask questions directly on the spot to get answers. However, they were never successful. That first time when they got answers seemed to be just a coincidence, or perhaps such a benefit could only be enjoyed after a very long interval. Similarly, Franca's Magic Mirror Divination ritual aimed at Arrodes also failed to get any feedback.
Soon, an employee from the legal department of Hall Film Company arrived with the contract.
Jenna read all the terms carefully, albeit with some difficulty, asked a few questions, and then promptly completed the signing.
Before she left Hall Film Company, the advance settlement fee had already been deposited into her account.

To her disappointment, Jia Yu didn't seem to come to the company today, so she couldn't bump into him and make initial contact by pretending to be a fan asking for an autograph.
...
At 2 pm.
Jenna arrived at Star Dream Provisions Store.
Only after entering the shop did she send a message to Franca, Lumian, and the others: "You can transfer the money to me now."
She hadn't done this in advance for fear of encountering obstacles along the way.
If they lost all their money because of this, their previous efforts would have been in vain!
Lumian and the others, who had been waiting in different places, quickly completed the transfers, each keeping only enough for living expenses for the next week.
Jenna walked up to the cashier and said to the shopkeeper, "Hello, can I rent that mirror?"
She was referring to the magic mirror Arrodes.
Earlier, the team had already discussed what would be best to rent first. Considering that the magic mirror Arrodes was the only item Mr. Fool carried while sleeping, as well as the specific rental price and the symbolic meaning of Demonesses in the dream world, they finally decided to rent this mirror.
"220,000 for one day." The shopkeeper raised her head and smiled in the suddenly dimmed light.
"Alright." Jenna didn't haggle.
After she completed the payment through the store's POS machine and signed a very simple rental contract, the shopkeeper said while lowering her head, "You can take that mirror now. Return it by 3 pm tomorrow."
Jenna instinctively swallowed and walked to the shelf, picking up the silver mirror with black eyeball-like objects on both sides.
After placing the magic mirror Arrodes into the Traveler's Bag, Jenna quietly let out a sigh of relief.
It wasn't easy!
Saving money really wasn't easy!

Chapter 975: The Diligent Magic Mirror

Late at night, in room 2303 of Dechuang Garden.

Lumian, Franca, and Jenna sat side by side on the long sofa, with the silver mirror bearing ancient patterns and black gemstones on each side placed in front of them.

Anthony had taken Ludwig out for a late-night snack, politely avoiding the question-and-answer session with the magic mirror Arrodes.

Of course, they had already discussed and decided which questions to ask beforehand, focusing mainly on two parts: first, Zaratulstra's current situation, and second, matters related to the dream city.

They had listed over twenty questions, but considering the subconscious limitations of the dream on various aspects, they believed it impossible to keep asking until all their doubts were answered by the magic mirror Arrodes. They suspected that the mirror could only answer a limited number of questions at a time or in a day, just like how Magic Mirror Divination normally only allowed three questions. Therefore, Lumian adjusted the order of the questions, placing the most important and crucial ones at the beginning.

"Shall we start?" Jenna turned her head to look at Lumian.

Lumian nodded and said calmly, "I'll go."

"No, we'll take turns. We can't let you bear the mirror's questions alone," Franca emphasized. "It must be fair!"

She felt that she should also make some sacrifices and not always let Lumian face the terrifying questions of the magic mirror Arrodes.

Lumian glanced at her. "Alright, you go first."

Franca took a deep breath and looked at the magic mirror Arrodes. "Great Arrodes, may I ask you a question?"

Since they had already rented the magic mirror from Star Dream Provisions Store, she didn't follow the mystical ritual procedure and directly inquired of the other party.

The surface of the ancient silver mirror instantly became dark, as if sinking to the bottom of lightless waters. Rows of blood-colored words in ancient Feysac then appeared: "I can answer any question you ask, but you must also answer an equal number of questions from me, in the presence of at least one witness.

"If you refuse to answer, or if you lie, you will face punishment."

Franca recalled the list of questions and carefully phrased her words, "My question is, what are the current manifestations of Zaratulstra's Beyonder powers in the dream city?"

This was one of the questions their team most wanted to know the answer to.
When Lumian watched the surveillance footage and listened to the wiretapped conversation last night, he only confirmed one point: Zaratulstra's summoning of images from the Historical Void had significant limitations. He wouldn't always use historical projections to replace himself in activities while hiding in the fog of history—before going to open the door for Jia Yu, he pulled out a past version of himself from the Historical Void, and that historical projection then communicated with Jia Yu for nearly a quarter of an hour.
Based on this, Lumian speculated that Zaratulstra would only use historical projections to replace himself for a period of time when he felt danger or had to face certain problematic individuals. As for disguising marionettes as his true self, Lumian believed that the Sequence 7 Faceless ability probably couldn't achieve this, but he didn't rule out the possibility that a similar ability descended from Sequence 2 to Sequence 7 might be able to.
The blood-red ancient Feysac words on the surface of the magic mirror Arrodes writhed and changed, revealing row after row:
"Zaratulstra can currently manipulate two marionettes. Through Spirit Body Threads, He can initially control a target for 20 seconds, and completely marionettize them in 1 minute and 30 seconds;
"His marionette manipulation range is 50 meters. He can switch positions with the marionettes. The marionettes can use their own abilities as well as borrow all of His abilities, but all at the Sequence 7 level;
"He can only maintain the existence of one Historical Void image at a time, including people, objects, scenes, and spirituality;
"He can currently maintain summoned Angel-level Historical Void images for 30 seconds to 1 minute, depending on His closeness to or understanding of the corresponding target. If He summons His past Sequence 1 self, it can be maintained for 1 minute and 30 seconds. If summoning His Sequence 2 self, it's 3 minutes. His past selves below angelic level can be maintained for up to a quarter of an hour. Other people, objects, and scenes below angelic level range from two to ten minutes;
"His Shapeshifting ability allows marionettes to disguise themselves as Him, surpassing any makeup effect. However, upon careful observation, differences can still be seen to determine authenticity;
"He can also Wish, creating some miracles, but the effects of these miracles are still restricted to the Sequence 7 level;
"His past Sequence 1 self could make the Spirit Body Threads of the

dead or certain objects reappear, thereby marionettizing them. If one eats marionettized food, they will be corrupted and gradually become marionettized;
"His past Sequence 1 self could also Graft physical entities or abstract concepts that normally couldn't be directly connected, combining them to achieve incredible effects. However, these incredible effects are still only at the Sequence 7 level;
"His past Sequence 1 self could distort space and time, creating a Realm of Mysteries that surpasses the Bottle of Fiction and possesses concealed properties;
...
"His Air Straw is twenty meters long, potentially helping Him avoid areas densely populated with mystical pathogens."
The magic mirror Arrodes described all of Zaratulstra's abilities and their current manifestations, causing the blood-red words on the mirror's surface to change several times.
However, it didn't provide enough details about the Sequence 2 and Sequence 1 level abilities, only briefly mentioning them.
The mirror is really working hard to awaken Mr. Fool... Franca couldn't help but grumble inwardly after reading everything carefully.
Lumian, meanwhile, recalled the historical projection of Zaratulstra that had conversed with Jia Yu.
Judging from the fact that they had talked for nearly a quarter of an hour, Lumian deduced that it was a Historical Void image of Zaratulstra before he became an Angel.
This also indicated that Zaratulstra wasn't a born mythical creature, but had ascended step by step from lower Sequences.
After displaying Zaratulstra's current abilities, the blood-colored words on the surface of the ancient silver mirror changed again:
"Based on the principle of reciprocity, it's my turn to ask a question.
"If you answer incorrectly or lie, you will be punished."
Franca gritted her teeth and nodded slightly.
What do they not know about me? There's nothing to be afraid of!
On the mirror, new words began to form, composing a sentence:
"After entering the dream city, have you ever thought about doing something with Lumian when Jenna wasn't around?"
Dammit, that's harsh... Franca didn't dare look at Jenna and squeezed out a word through her teeth. "Yes..."
She immediately defended herself, "I just thought about it occasionally, never put it into practice! This is Mr. Fool's dream, how dare I do anything inappropriate? If Mr. Fool's subconscious remembers it, I'd be socially dead for real!"

Lumian glanced at the rapidly speaking Franca and the silent Jenna, suspecting that while making Franca feel ashamed and embarrassed, the magic mirror Arrodes might also have a hidden intention of helping Jenna digest the Affliction potion.

It's really going all out to wake up Mr. Fool...

Franca finally finished speaking and mustered the courage to look at Jenna, receiving an encouraging smile and slight nod from her.

Lumian spoke on Franca's behalf, "The second question is, has Zaratulstra discovered my surveillance?"

The ancient silver mirror with two black gemstones like eyes displayed new blood-colored words: "Zaratulstra discovered that someone was spying through mirror-like objects, but doesn't know who. He also learned about the existence of pinhole cameras and wiretaps, because He has a Saint-level Seer subordinate living next door who can marionettize mosquitoes and hide them in the room to observe the situation."

So, when I cautiously used the Fire of Destruction to burn all spiritually imbued things in Zaratulstra's room, it made him alert that someone had infiltrated his room. After a covert search, he discovered the pinhole cameras and wiretaps? But because his marionette subordinate died, he only knows someone infiltrated his room, not who it was... Lumian immediately analyzed the important information hidden in the magic mirror Arrodes' answer.

At the same time, he suspected that Zaratulstra knew Mr. Huang had concealed the fact that someone was spying through mirror-like objects but didn't expose it on the spot.

Moreover, knowing there was surveillance, Zaratulstra still had Jia Yu come to his room for a private conversation. Was this to mislead us, making us think Jia Yu was important and focus our attention there? But his plan to poach Jia Yu wasn't a sudden decision; it should have started before I went to spy on him in the hotel room... Does he think that deep contact with Jia Yu holds hidden dangers, and without knowing certain details, it could easily lead to him being kicked out of the dream? So he deliberately exposed his intentions to let us step on the landmine?

Lumian's thoughts were in turmoil, feeling that Zaratulstra—this Seer—was really quite similar to a Conspirer, his mind full of conspiracies and schemes.

Now that he knew Zaratulstra had discovered his spying and had been acting all along, Lumian could design targeted action plans.

Demonesses had ways and abilities to evade the dangerous premonitions of a Seer!

After answering, the magic mirror Arrodes routinely displayed the

corresponding prompt before posing a question to Lumian: "Is your feeling for Franca and Jenna love, or just valuing them?"
Lumian fell momentarily quiet before responding, "I value them."
After a few seconds of silence in the sofa area, Jenna moved forward slightly and said, "It's my turn to ask."
Lumian and Franca both nodded.
Jenna recalled the list of prepared questions and looked at the ancient silver mirror.
"The third question is, who was the last person to rent you?"
The blood-red words on the mirror's surface suddenly disappeared, leaving only a faint shimmer of water.
After several seconds, a few words appeared on the deep, dark surface of the mirror—the unique text of the dream city, all in a pale white color: "It's Peng Deng."
Peng Deng? The person who spent 220,000 to rent the magic mirror Arrodes for a day was Peng Deng? Lumian, Franca, and Jenna were all shocked.

Chapter 976: Scheming and Strategizing

Regarding who had previously rented the magic mirror, Lumian and the others had various guesses, but they never imagined it would be Peng Deng.

Where did Peng Deng get so much money?

Why did Peng Deng want to rent the magic mirror Arrodes?

What exactly did Peng Deng want to do?

Lumian, Jenna, and Franca looked at each other, all feeling it necessary to adjust the order of questions and temporarily add some related to Peng Deng renting the mirror.

At this moment, the pale white text on the silver mirror's surface twisted and writhed, turning blood-red again and stretching into individual ancient Feysac words:

"Based on the principle of reciprocity, it's my turn to ask a question.

"If you answer incorrectly or lie, you will be punished."

Jenna nodded slightly, beginning to think about what question to ask next.

The blood-red words on the mirror changed to new content: "Have you considered how you would intimately get along with Lumian and Franca if you switched to the Hunter pathway in the future and became male?"

That's quite a subtle way of asking... Jenna sensed Arrodes' goodwill.

Although it was still quite embarrassing, for someone who was once a Showy Diva, she could answer with her eyes closed. "I have thought about it."

Franca's mind suddenly flashed with a thought: Thought about being on top or on top?

She steadied herself and looked at the mirror.

"The fourth question, what did Peng Deng do with the help of the great Arrodes?"

On the surface of the ancient silver mirror, the blood-red words quickly faded away, the watery sheen receded, and it no longer had a deep, dark feel.

Franca's question went unanswered.

"So it's only three questions..." She sighed in disappointment.

Lumian thought for a moment and said, "Let's try asking again before returning it to Star Dream Provisions Store this afternoon. Perhaps the interval between inquiries is calculated by time, not by rental frequency."

"Mm." Jenna nodded.

Of course, she would be responsible for returning the rental.

...
Friday morning.
Zhou Mingrui, busy at his workstation, felt his phone vibrate beside him.
He picked it up and saw a message from Luo Shan: "I might be losing my job. Let me treat you to dinner again tonight."
"What happened?" Zhou Mingrui asked, both puzzled and concerned.
Luo Shan sent a " " emoji:
"I'll tell you when we have dinner. Oh, and Luo Fu will be there too."
"Alright, should I choose what to eat, or will you?" Zhou Mingrui politely asked.
"It's my treat, so of course I'll choose!" Luo Shan quickly replied.
After putting down his phone, Zhou Mingrui focused on his computer screen, as if seriously evaluating his previous work results.
In reality, he was thinking about Luo Shan's situation.
How could she suddenly lose her job? The last time we had dinner, Luo Shan was praising Mr. Huang for paying well and the relaxed work atmosphere. She didn't seem to have any intention of quitting...
Is it because of her special circumstances that she must change her workplace, or does the company want to fire her, or both?
About half of the administrative department came because of Mr. Huang. Luo Shan is considered a very qualified employee. There's no reason for the HR department to actively fire her. Moreover, the company's overall revenue and profits have reached new highs, and they even said the administrative department was short-staffed, specifically hiring Luo Fu...
Has Luo Shan shown any unusual behavior or done anything problematic recently?
Zhou Mingrui thought back and forth, feeling that after Luo Shan discarded those original paintings, everything seemed normal, except for secretly forming a group with Luo Fu and Li Ming, and warning him to be wary of Zaratulstra.
The group is in talks with Zaratulstra's company about a merger and restructuring... Luo Shan has warned me twice to be careful of Zaratulstra... Luo Shan then gets suddenly being fired...
Is there a connection between these events?
Well, after Luo Fu warned me last time, she was off for a few days. Tonight, she and Luo Shan might hint at something again...
Because his previous interactions with Luo Shan and Luo Fu hadn't brought any abnormalities or led to attacks or difficulties, Zhou

Mingrui wasn't averse to having another meal with them and listening to what they had to say.
Frankly, if it weren't for Luo Shan and Li Ming hinting three times since Sunday to be wary of Zaratulstra, he would have felt that everything around him was calm and normal, without any issues, as if he had never drunk the Assassin beverage.
But the more it seemed so, the stranger Zhou Mingrui felt, as if he were trapped in a cocoon, with various abnormalities lingering outside, waiting for a chance to invade, yet invisible to him.
So he was trying hard to probe, and contacting Luo Shan and Luo Fu was part of that effort.
...
Hall Film Company, Talent Department.
The young employee who had previously introduced various situations to Jenna smiled at her.
"I'm Jiang Yue. I'm responsible for helping you new recruits connect with various departments of the company. You can come to me for anything."
"What a coincidence." Jenna, who had changed into a short-sleeved chiffon blouse, smiled back.
Jiang Yue looked around and said, "This isn't a coincidence, it's destiny.
"Why was I waiting outside the conference room to take the interviewees out? It's because I'm responsible for these matters later on. Well, I'm not the only one in charge of you new recruits. When selecting, I chose you first. I have high hopes for you, keep it up!"
Whether Jiang Yue was sincere or not, these words made Jenna quite pleased, giving her a feeling of being valued and affirmed, naturally generating a happy mood.
Jiang Yue continued, "I thought you'd only report to work on Monday. The physical training courses and media response courses arranged for you are all next week. Well, today let's just chat casually. I'll give you a tour, and if we happen to meet a producer or director, you might get a chance to audition soon."
If I had come next week, Jia Yu might have already paid the penalty and left... Jenna followed Jiang Yue, walking forward in the Talent Department.
She glanced at Jia Yu's studio and said, "Jia Yu isn't here? I have a friend who's his fan. I wanted to get his autograph."
"He's not here. After The Great Pirate 3 blew up, he's been coming to the company less and less," Jiang Yue said with a complex tone. "Today he said he was going to attend a film-related event."
Jenna showed a disappointed expression on her face and nodded,

saying, "The Great Pirate 3 is quite popular, with high box office numbers."
"Yeah, although those film critics all say it's just a qualified popcorn flick, audiences love watching popcorn flicks. What can those that don't even qualify compare with us?" Jiang Yue said, somewhat indignantly.
Jenna took this opportunity to ask, "So, is the company planning to make The Great Pirate 4?"
Jiang Yue lowered her voice. "There is such a plan, but the problem is that the romance queen is too slow. We've already finished filming and released The Great Pirate 3, but she still hasn't written The Great Pirate 4!"
After all, the person herself has been completely kicked out... After all, the dream manifestation's pen name is "Salted Fish Without Dreams"... Jenna continued Jiang Yue's conversation for a few sentences and then said, "Moreover, I see that The Great Pirate 3 is popular mainly because of the adventurer image of German Sparrow. If the next one doesn't have him as the main character, I think there will be big problems. The box office might even be a disaster, just like how The Great Pirate 1 and The Great Pirate 2 movies didn't have much fame."
This was laying the groundwork for the team's alternative awakening plan.
Jiang Yue was stunned for a moment. "The Great Pirate 1 and The Great Pirate 2 were never made into movies."
"Huh?" Jenna was stunned for two seconds and then said, "Then why is this movie directly called 'The Great Pirate 3'?"
"I don't know either," Jiang Yue answered with a bewildered face. "The big boss personally decided it, and no one else raised any objections. If you hadn't mentioned it, I wouldn't have remembered that the previous parts of 'The Great Pirate' series hadn't been made into movies..."
What's going on? How can they skip The Great Pirate 1 and The Great Pirate 2 and directly make The Great Pirate 3? Even if they skip, why not change the name instead of adding "3"? Amidst her confusion, Jenna vaguely grasped a key point.
This was related to one of Anderson Hood's reminders.
The master of the dream city is a symbol of loopholes and errors, so no matter how real this dream is, there will still be inconsistencies, loopholes, and places that make people feel terrified upon deep thought. It will still express the "dream" aspect!
A dream normally operates smoothly, but if outsiders do something beyond the norm and pointing to loopholes in between, could it create problems? For example, being illogically accepted by

the masses, or being absurd and horrifying in the underlying realization of things...
After Madam Justice forcibly named this movie 'The Great Pirate 3' instead of 'The Great Adventurer', the dream manifestations naturally accepted it, and only outsiders could discover the discrepancy, while dream manifestations could perceive the problem after being reminded?
Madam Justice didn't mention this point because it was linked to An Xiaotian's car accident, and she forgot after being forced to leave the dream?
The reason for the loophole of The Great Pirate movie having 3 but no 1 and 2 is because Mr. Fool's subconscious believes this book series should indeed be made into movies? Jenna thought a lot in an instant.
She didn't delve deeper into this topic, fearing that Jiang Yue, as a dream manifestation, would become more confused and conflicted, leading to chaos in the corresponding dream and affecting herself.
"Since it can't be filmed later, The Great Pirate 3 can be made into stage plays, animations, TV series, games, and such, taking full advantage while the movie's popularity is still high." Jenna acted like an enthusiastic and kind-hearted audience member.
Jiang Yue nodded in agreement. "True."
She then said self-mockingly, "Is this something we can decide? Wait until the next meeting, and suggest it to our boss, Mei Xin. Let her whisper it to the big boss."
...
In a high-end hot pot restaurant with a proper stage.
In a private room on the second floor, Mr. Huang introduced to Zaratulstra beside him, "This hot pot restaurant has a unique feature. Later, there will be a face-changing performance, one of the local intangible cultural heritages..."
Zaratulstra, sitting next to the window, glanced at the large screens behind and around the stage, smiled and nodded slightly. "I'm looking forward to it."
Just as Mr. Huang was about to say something more, his phone suddenly rang.
The caller was "Bernie".
"Excuse me, I'll take this call first." Mr. Huang stood up with his phone and walked towards the door of the private room.

Chapter 977: The Best Support

After Mr. Huang left the private room to take the call, Zaratulstra leaned towards the center of the window, as if trying to get a clearer view of the stage and the corresponding large screen.

At the same time, Mr. Ed and other Intis Group employees responsible for reception, as well as Zaratulstra's entourage, all heard their phones vibrate.

They instinctively picked up their phones, unlocked the screens, and saw a pop-up message.

This wasn't a text message or WeChat notification, nor was it an alert for an incoming call. It seemed to be just a simple dialog box that had taken over the screen.

The dialog box contained a brief line of text: "Please be quiet for one minute."

As Mr. Ed, the Intis Group employees, and Zaratulstra's entourage noticed this line of text, it jumped up one by one, directly out of the phone screens, transforming into an invisible, colorless stream of information carrying mystical power that entered the heads of the corresponding people.

Except for Mr. Huang, who was making a phone call outside the private room, and Zaratulstra, who was looking at the stage below, everyone present suddenly became dazed, their eyes vacant, their bodies frozen in their previous positions.

They had truly become quiet.

Zaratulstra sensed something amiss and turned his gaze back to the people in the private room.

As he did so, out of the corner of his eye, he noticed his own reflection faintly appearing in the already open window.

His heart skipped a beat, and he instinctively pulled back his body, preventing the window from reflecting him anymore.

At this moment, behind the corresponding glass mirror surface, Lumian, in his Demoness of Despair form with disheveled black hair and wearing a dark T-shirt, quietly watched as Zaratulstra's ethereal figure appeared on the mirror and quickly moved towards the edge.

The normally invisible Spirit Body Threads on his body, upon touching the hard mirror surface, no longer extended as usual, but were drawn upwards by some force, disappearing into the deep, dark sky above.

This was Distortion's alteration of the Spirit Body Threads extension direction. This way, Zaratulstra wouldn't be able to detect in advance if someone was spying or lying in ambush behind the mirror by observing Spirit Body Threads.

The effect of Distortion came from the edge of the area behind the mirror, near the ghostly tunnel resembling a spider web, from a crown inlaid with numerous dark gems.
The crown floated silently in midair, with a tall, beautiful woman standing behind it.
This woman had tied her slightly curly chestnut hair into a bun, had straight eyebrows, blue eyes, and was wearing a white short-sleeved T-shirt and light-colored trousers. She was none other than Miss Bernie Huang.
She held a phone in her hand, talking to Huang Tao.
Logically, there shouldn't be any signal in the mirror world, but Bernie Huang's words, after going through the phone, directly transformed into an invisible stream of information, drilling out of this place. The replies from Huang Tao were similarly affected by Beyonder powers, entering as pure information streams and being converted into sound by the phone.
Lumian glanced at Miss Huang, recalling what she had said before the operation: "I can provide help for you, but I can't directly participate in the battle.
"I've already been kicked out of this dream twice and am under certain restrictions. If Zaratulstra sees me as his enemy, I might be kicked out of the dream for the third time, and the problem with my father hasn't been resolved yet...
"I'll create opportunities for you, but killing Zaratulstra or kicking him out of the dream can only be done by yourselves...
"This item can't be lent to you, otherwise, before Zaratulstra dies, you'll die first..."
Lumian hesitated no longer and, looking at Zaratulstra's Mirror Projection that hadn't yet disappeared, raised his left hand.
On his wrist was a silver bracelet that lit up with a silver-white and black glow.
Circle Inhabitant!
Lumian seized the opportunity and used Circle Inhabitant on Zaratulstra's fading Mirror Projection!
Of course, this was also suppressed to the Sequence 7 level, unable to make the corresponding fate repeat, and could only be triggered twice at most.
The current implementation of Circle Inhabitant was to make similar scenes appear again in a short time through disturbances in fate.
In the private room, after Zaratulstra pulled back his body, preventing the glass window from reflecting him again, he suddenly felt a gust of wind blowing from the entrance of the hot pot restaurant.

Before he could check the status of the others at the table, he found the window being blown, moving towards closing.
This once again cast his reflection onto the corresponding glass.
In Zaratul's deep blue, almost pure black eyes, a dim light flashed, already sensing the presence of anomalies, not just simple vigilance.
He raised his right hand, using a Miracle Invoker's ability to influence the future.
He reduced the probability of his Mirror Projection being utilized by others!
In the mirror world, Lumian held an ice crystal thin sword wrapped in terrifying black flames in one hand, while touching the river of fate of Zaratulstra's Mirror Projection with the other, trying to magnify the fate tributary of his successful attack.
The two forces collided, with Zaratulstra's prevailing slightly, causing that fate tributary not only to fail to magnify but to shrink by one-tenth.
However, for Lumian, this was enough.
His use of the Magnified Fate ability wasn't to increase the probability of the curse succeeding, but to counteract the Miracle Invoker's interference with fate.
Being so close to Zaratulstra's Mirror Projection, as long as there was no interference from the Miracle Invoker, or as long as the Miracle Invoker's interference wasn't strong enough, his chances of achieving his goal were quite high.
Lumian's ice crystal thin sword darted out, striking the reappearing Mirror Projection of Zaratulstra.
The Fire of Destruction wrapped around the ice crystal thin sword instantly poured into that projection, igniting it from the inside out, placing it in pure, mad destruction.
This was a curse, a curse aimed at Zaratulstra!
The mystical principle behind many of a Demoness's curses was to utilize Mirror Projections, which was also a kind of Mirror Person, a temporary, short-lived Mirror Person with a very strong mystical connection to the original person!
When Lumian's Fire of Destruction ignited Zaratulstra's Mirror Projection, in the private room, Zaratulstra's eyes, nose, ears, mouth, skin pores, and other places erupted with violent black flames.
In an instant, this old man became a black torch, his body quickly thinning and shrinking, burning to ashes.
Paper Figurine Substitutes!
For an Angel like Zaratulstra, Paper Figurine Substitutes could long be used to transfer curses, but to escape a curse completed by a

Demoness through a Mirror Projection, the main body still needed to hide in the fog of history in time.
After interfering with the development of fate using his Miracle Invoker ability, Zaratulstra didn't think the first wave of attacks would end there. He quickly used Paper Figurine Substitute, while he cautiously entered the fog of history, hiding in a crevice.
The scene of him burning into a paper figurine didn't attract the attention of those at the table.
Those people were still in a quiet state.
In the mirror world.
Near the illusory dark tunnel, Bernadette held a phone in one hand, while with the other, she made several dark gems on the crown in front of her light up with strange radiance.
Distortion!
She used Distortion again, swapping the spatial positions of Zaratulstra's main body plus Paper Figurine Substitute and his Mirror Projection.
Thus, Zaratulstra, who had hidden in the fog of history, and the Paper Figurine Substitute that had been burned to ashes, came to the mirror world.
This place was also connected to the spirit world, this place also had the fog of history.
Meanwhile, Zaratulstra's Mirror Projection sat by the hot pot table, quickly disappearing into nothingness amidst the madly growing black flames.
It vanished into the void along with these Flames of Destruction.
After completing this, Bernadette quickly put away the crown inlaid with dark gems, stepped back twice, and disappeared into the illusory, complex tunnel resembling a spider web.
Throughout this process, she maintained her call with Mr. Huang.
Lumian showed no emotional fluctuation at Bernadette's departure. According to their agreement, this princess was mainly responsible for three things:
First, to draw away Mr. Huang, who was suspected to be influenced by the mirrored Roselle;
Second, to use the Mystery Pryer pathway's control over the information world to "push" a message to the others in the private room that would make them "quiet", with the subsequent cleanup and erasure of traces to be done by the Information Shredder—Lumian still remembered that when Miss Huang saw the Information Shredder, her expression noticeably became more complex, as if seeing a natural enemy being artificially created;
Third, to help Lumian and the others hide their Spirit Body Threads, preventing Zaratulstra from discovering them in

advance. If Lumian failed to assassinate successfully in the initial stage, she would help bring Zaratulstra into the mirror world, allowing them to change from assassination to forced killing, with the possibility of one more indirect assistance later depending on the situation.
This way, Lumian and the others wouldn't have to worry about their battle with Zaratulstra attracting the official forces of the dream city, being interrupted by them, or even hunted down.
Moreover, Zaratulstra would be separated from his marionettes.
Even if Zaratulstra could manipulate the Spirit Body Threads through the mirror, those marionettes, if they didn't possess the power to come to the mirror world, wouldn't be able to participate in this battle.
Cutting off the marionettes was the first step in dealing with high-level beings of the Seer pathway.
As the Paper Figurine Substitute was completely burned, Zaratulstra, at Sequence 7 and unable to stay in the fog of history for too long, returned to reality.
He saw that he was in the void dark area behind the mirror, and near the mirror surface stood a figure whose charm couldn't be concealed even by darkness.
Lumian smiled, making this area seem as if it was illuminated by clear moonlight.
Charm!
Zaratulstra's consciousness was momentarily stunned, all Worms of Spirit seemingly marveling at that heart-piercing beauty.
Almost simultaneously, the invisible spider silk that had long been spread throughout this place entangled him.
Lumian then drew the Sword of Courage and, from a distance of over ten meters, slashed towards Zaratulstra.
That iron-black straight sword created a highly compressed fire serpent, falling towards the old man dressed in a black formal suit from a distance.
At the edge of the area behind the mirror, Jenna emerged from her Invisible state, used the mirror in her hand to reflect Zaratulstra's figure, and smeared her other hand, covered in Demoness black flames, onto it.

Chapter 978: Wishes

Boom!

The highly compressed red fire serpent exploded, engulfing Zaratulstra before Jenna could complete her curse. It tore him into shreds of paper, causing them to ignite simultaneously.

Zaratulstra once again retreated into the fog of history.

As the explosion from the red fire serpent began to subside, he returned to the present from a corner of the area behind the mirror, dragging out his past self from the Historical Void—the self that was a Sequence 1 Attendant of Mysteries.

As soon as Zaratulstra appeared, clad in a black robe with eyes pure black and lightless, he immediately transformed into a massive vortex composed of countless maggots.

This enormous vortex was deep and dark, extending numerous slimy tentacles covered in bizarre patterns.

Mythical Creature form—the Mythical Creature form of the Seer pathway!

For Angels, the Mythical Creature form was their truest appearance, so there was no question of whether They could or could not transform into it within the dream city. Of course, this too was suppressed to the Sequence 7 level.

The instant he saw the maggot vortex, even Lumian, as a Demoness of Despair and possessing godhood, couldn't help but feel his thoughts stutter, his joints stiffen, and his mind as if it were under attack from a super-strong hurricane.

He instinctively closed his eyes, while Jenna, who was near the mirror tunnel, seemed to be twisting her entire body.

Seizing this opportunity, Zaratulstra's main body made a wish, "My wish is: For my marionettes to return to my side."

As soon as the words were spoken, two more figures appeared in the area behind the mirror.

They were dressed as business people, one male and one female.

As for the other marionettes, they of course belonged to other Marionettists. Zaratulstra could command their operators, not them directly.

Zaratulstra didn't wish to leave the mirror world because he had sensed the presence of Distortion power from the fact that he had been swapped into the mirror world despite hiding in the fog of history. So he chose not to directly leave the current area.

He feared having his position Distorted again, which might cause him to appear out of thin air in front of Yagates, the number one figure in the police department.

At this moment, because Zaratulstra's Mythical Creature form was

restricted to Sequence 7, both the godhood impact and mental corruption effects were greatly reduced. So Lumian, as a Demoness of Despair, with his eyes closed and maintaining distance, began to recover. He raised his left hand and snapped his fingers with a loud crack.
In different parts of the area behind the mirror, under the cover of a Mirror Maze composed of numerous mirrors, groups of delayed explosion fireballs that had been prepared in advance received the order to explode immediately!
Rumble!
They exploded simultaneously, intertwining with each other, causing a fierce red flame storm to cover the entire area behind the mirror, completely engulfing Zaratulstra's Historical Void image, the two marionettes, along with Jenna and Lumian.
This was the Hunter's home turf, a battlefield meticulously prepared by Lumian!
As for Zaratulstra's main body, he had once again hidden in the fog of history.
Rumble!
Zaratulstra's two marionettes used Paper Figurine Substitutes, being torn to pieces in the violent impact waves and ignited by the red flames.
Zaratulstra's Historical Void image maintained its Mythical Creature form, extending numerous tentacles to entangle the oncoming flame storm.
He Grafted himself onto the flames, thus avoiding harm, merely drifting to another side with the storm.
Normally, Grafting suppressed to Sequence 7 wouldn't allow Zaratulstra's Historical Void image to recombine with the concept of fire, but Sequence 7 Magician of the Seer pathway could manipulate flames, having a very close connection with fire itself. Therefore, Zaratulstra's Historical Void image could become a special kind of flame, constantly flashing within the storm.
Lumian's body also shattered like a mirror.
Immediately after, he teleported near the newly emerged female marionette, using the mirror in his hand to reflect her figure, and smeared the Flames of Destruction imbued with Cull forces onto the mirror surface.
Affected by both Zaratulstra's main body entering the fog of history and his historical projection turning into a "flame" drifting with the storm, the female marionette had no time to react or time to hide in the fog of history. Extremely suppressed black flames hiding destruction, erupted from within her body.
She quickly regressed into a paper figurine, but when she emerged

in another part of the area behind the mirror, the Flames of Destruction on her body had not extinguished.
After using Paper Figurine Substitute twice in succession, this marionette's main body also turned to ashes.
At this point, the terrifying scene created by the groups of delayed explosion fireballs finally subsided. Zaratulstra's Historical Void image extended his right hand and gently grasped.
The surrounding space-time distorted in response, covering the entire area behind the mirror as if with a giant curtain, forming a concealed area isolated from the surroundings.
Realm of Mysteries!
After confirming that Lumian and Jenna had been pulled into the Realm of Mysteries by his historical projection and could not prevent him for a short time, Zaratulstra returned from the fog of history, landing at the edge of the dark and void area behind the mirror.
He ignored his historical projection and the remaining marionettes that were also trapped in the Realm of Mysteries, walking directly towards the glass mirror surface leading to the hot pot restaurant's private room.
Now, he had the energy to be vigilant and avoid the influence of the Distortion forces.
Just as Zaratulstra approached the glass mirror surface, he suddenly heard a "bang" of a gunshot.
A golden bullet, carrying an indescribable sense of decay, flew out from one of the spider web-like tunnels, heading straight for his chest.
Anthony, wearing a cheap black T-shirt and sporting a crew cut, flashed out of the tunnel following the bullet.
He had been lurking there using the power of the Ice Mirror Charm, not venturing into the area behind the mirror, so he wasn't encompassed by the Realm of Mysteries created by Zaratulstra's historical projection.
As Zaratulstra's main body avoided the bullet, Anthony, using the remnant power of Mirror Traversal, instantly appeared beside the white-haired old man.
He raised a pre-drawn picture while his eyes turned golden and vertical.
Frenzy!
Anthony thought that Zaratulstra had resurrected by seizing Loki's body, so there might still be some struggle between them. Therefore, using Frenzy to target Zaratulstra's mental state might have a miraculous effect.
The picture in his hand was drawn on a blank sketchbook,

depicting a door, a lock, and wooden bars completely sealing the door.
The picture spontaneously ignited, turning into a phantom image that attached itself to the glass mirror surface leading to the outside world, sealing it with wooden bars and adding a lock.
Zaratulstra, directly affected by Frenzy, suddenly faded, becoming a phantom.
This was a Magician's ability to create illusions.
After returning from the fog of history, the first thing Zaratulstra actually did was create an illusion, rather than directly approaching the exit.
He used this to make Anthony misjudge his position, only hitting the illusion.
Zaratulstra's true figure quickly sketched itself not far away, speaking coldly in Dragonese, "My wish is: To banish the enemies here."
Before Anthony could use his area-of-effect Awe, he suddenly blacked out, as if lifted by an invisible force and thrown into the air.
When he regained consciousness, he found himself in a prison, with no mirror-like objects around to use—all the iron bars were wrapped in cotton cloth.
Zaratulstra chose to banish Anthony rather than wish for his death because this Angel believed that the enemy mixed with the Demoness likely also had one or two Mirror Substitutions, which would lead to a momentary failure of the wish and a waste of time.
However, this meant that Lumian, who was inside the Realm of Mysteries, was unaffected by the miracle and remained inside.
Zaratulstra's wish was to banish the enemies "here", and the Realm of Mysteries no longer belonged to "here"!
No longer disturbed by Anthony, Zaratulstra turned his gaze back to the glass mirror surface.
He had already realized two wishes, creating two miracles, which had considerably drained him. So he just opened his mouth, preparing to use an Air Cannon to blast the wooden bars and lock, removing their blockade of the exit.
Inside the Realm of Mysteries,Jenna had disappeared, while Lumian, having slightly recovered, teleported behind Zaratulstra's historical projection.
He raised his head, looking up high, letting his eyes, which had burst many capillaries from directly viewing the Mythical Creature form earlier, turn iron-black. At the same time, he let out a harrumph.

As two beams of white light shot from his nostrils towards the dark vortex composed of worms, he threw the Sword of Courage in his hand upwards towards a certain point in the sky.
That place appeared pale white in his eyes.
It was the weakness of the Realm of Mysteries!
Even though the Realm of Mysteries was an ability that only Sequence 1 could use, it currently only had the strength of Sequence 7!
Outside the Realm of Mysteries.
Zaratulstra made a "bang" sound, firing an Air Cannon, causing the wooden bars and iron lock drawn on the glass mirror surface to shatter inch by inch.
At this moment, several figures traversed through another tunnel.
There was Ludwig wearing a child's formal attire, a slightly plump female version of Anthony with a mature demeanor and fairly pretty features, and a handsome male version of Jenna with flaxen hair styled dashingly.
The real Jenna was still hiding inside the tunnel, not entering this area behind the mirror.
Her previous appearance was a shallow mirror person created using special Mirror World Fragments, which could be maintained for a longer time to confuse Zaratulstra. However, under the influence of Lumian's area explosion and the Realm of Mysteries earlier, that weak shallow mirror person had been destroyed.
The current male version of Jenna and female version of Anthony were deep mirror people created in advance using the special Mirror World Fragments in Franca and Lumian's possession. They could only be maintained for three minutes, but in terms of abilities, they almost perfectly replicated the originals, and could also borrow power from the special mirror world to a certain extent.
After the battle with the reanimated female corpse, Lumian and the others began to pay more attention to the abilities that came with the special Mirror World Fragments.
In the real world, the effect might not be obvious, but in the dream city where everyone was suppressed to Sequence 7, the more mirror helpers, the better!
Jenna hadn't let her male version, the female version of Anthony, and Ludwig follow Anthony to attack Zaratulstra earlier because she remembered Lumian's prior reminder: "If we fail to assassinate successfully, subsequent attacks should come in batches. We can't all rush in at once, lest Zaratulstra's special ability takes us all away at once. This can also deplete his spirituality and the number of times he can use his special

abilities..."
In the Hunter's home turf, although it couldn't be said that they could make arrangements for the enemy from beginning to end, at least the first few waves of attacks could reflect their intentions!

Chapter 979: Mythical Creature

Faced with the attack from Ludwig, the male version of Jenna, and the female version of Anthony, Zaratulstra showed no surprise.

His body inside the black formal wear suddenly disintegrated, along with his face, collapsing inward into a dark vortex.

If one looked closely at this vortex, they would see countless transparent insects frantically writhing, seemingly crawling into the observer's mind and body, devouring thoughts and nerves.

From within the sleeves and pant legs of the black formal wear, numerous slimy tentacles covered in bizarre patterns extended outward.

Zaratulstra had also revealed his Mythical Creature form!

Unlike His Historical Void image, His clothes were real, not part of a historical projection. They didn't transform into the Mythical Creature, remaining draped over the surface of the maggot vortex.

This made Him appear even more terrifying.

As Zaratulstra revealed his Mythical Creature form, both the male version of Jenna and the female version of Anthony instantly froze.

One's hair rapidly grew thicker and longer, their skin losing its luster, while the other's face became covered in patches of grayish-white dragon scales.

Silently, their bodies simultaneously collapsed. The former turned into a writhing mass of flesh, covered in thick, slimy, and bizarre black hair as thick as small snakes. The tips of these hairs struggled to open black and white eyes or stick out snake-like tongues. The latter disintegrated into several lizards covered in grayish-white dragon scales.

They had lost control.

Although Zaratulstra's Mythical Creature form was suppressed to the Sequence 7 level, as deep Mirror People, their mental states were already unstable, and their emotions tended towards extremes. Naturally, they couldn't help but lose control.

With this development, Ludwig's movements slowed slightly, his mind bearing the impact of the female Anthony's indiscriminate Frenzy.

Just as he was about to succumb to the male Jenna's Charm and turn to devour that mass of flesh, the two out-of-control deep Mirror People began to fade and become transparent, quickly disappearing.

They were illusory to begin with.

Ludwig could only open his mouth wide, his mouth corners splitting to the back of his head.

Then, he leaped towards Zaratulstra's Mythical Creature form in its black formal wear, biting down on one of the extended bizarre tentacles.
He wanted to use this to Deprive Zaratulstra of His Paper Figurine Substitutes ability.
Crack!
Ludwig bit down, but only crushed a paper figurine.
Zaratulstra, transformed into a Mythical Creature, appeared in midair. Within the dark vortex of countless maggots that formed His face, several differently colored gems seemed to light up simultaneously.
Around Ludwig, who still had the paper figurine in his mouth, numerous illusory doors suddenly appeared.
These illusory doors took various forms: some double-doored, some single, some barely showing a crack, some covered in mysterious patterns... They were densely packed and numerous, completely enveloping Ludwig.
As Zaratulstra waved His slimy tentacles, one of the illusory doors suddenly opened, welcoming Ludwig as he was thrown towards it.
Ludwig's figure instantly disappeared into the profound darkness behind the door.
Exile!
This was a Secrets Sorcerer ability that Zaratulstra used with the aid of a certain Sealed Artifact. It could throw the target into a corresponding space-time turbulence, only able to return after five seconds. Of course, complete return was contingent on the person or object thrown into the space-time turbulence being able to withstand its impact.
Combined with a Miracle Invoker's influence on fate, this could banish Ludwig for a full ten seconds.
In just two or three seconds, Zaratulstra had permanently or temporarily dealt with the third wave of attacking enemies.
He spoke again in the Dragonese, "My wish is: that no one else will interfere with me from now on."
As soon as the words were spoken, Zaratulstra realized His wish.
Affected by this aspect of his abilities being suppressed to Sequence 7, the realization of his wish had clear boundaries—it was limited to only the next thirty seconds, with poor effectiveness against enemies possessing godhood. The stronger the godhood, the more likely they were to break through the restrictions and interfere with him.
At this moment, Jenna, hiding in one of the tunnels, suddenly found herself unable to "traverse" to the corresponding area behind the mirror.

Zaratulstra, maintaining His Mythical Creature form, descended from midair, floating towards the glass mirror surface leading to the hot pot restaurant's private room.
Rumble!
He heard a faint explosion and saw a place in the area behind the mirror where an illusory curtain seemed to be pushed up, but not completely broken through.
Inside the Realm of Mysteries.
When Lumian threw the Sword of Courage and used the Spell of Harrumph, Zaratulstra's historical projection instantly swapped positions with His marionette.
The marionette, hit by the two beams of white light, only shook slightly.
His spirit was essentially already dead.
Rumble!
The Sword of Courage struck the weak point of the Realm of Mysteries, creating a terrifying explosion, but failed to penetrate through.
Amidst this chaos, Lumian's figure disappeared, Blinking to the side of Zaratulstra's Historical Void image.
His left hand was already raised, the silver bracelet on his wrist glowing with a silvery-white light tinged with black.
Circle Inhabitant!
Lumian once again used Circle Inhabitant, targeting the position of Zaratulstra's Historical Void image!
Of course, this attempt also forced him to face the other's Mythical Creature form directly. His thoughts and joints were once again filled with glue, and his mental state showed signs of some confusion.
It was only because he possessed godhood, and the other's Mythical Creature form was also limited to the Sequence 7 level, that he didn't lose control on the spot. Otherwise, even if he hadn't lost control immediately, he would have been in a state where his mind was swept by a storm, unable to continue subsequent actions.
Just as Zaratulstra's Historical Void image was about to continue swapping positions with His marionette, He suddenly found the attempt failed.
He remained in place.
Seizing this opportunity, Lumian, his eyes showing a silver-black color, suddenly pushed his right palm forward.
All his remaining spirituality surged towards the river of fate of Zaratulstra's historical projection.
Compelling Fate!

He wanted to compel the fate of Zaratulstra's historical projection to rush towards the imagined tributary!
Due to the influence of Zaratulstra's historical projection's own status, the probability of success for this action was actually not high. But as a historical projection, there was a natural flaw, problem, and weakness in terms of fate, which was the time limit on their existence.
If Lumian wanted to compel fate to make Zaratulstra's historical projection fall into dire straits and be killed by his subsequent attacks, it would depend on whether Mr. Fool would provide protection. But if he chose the fate tributary of "historical projection prematurely terminated due to unexpected influence", there was a considerable chance of achieving the goal!
In an instant, Lumian's spirituality was completely drained, forcing him to release the part he had accumulated in advance to barely support himself.
His body involuntarily leaned back slightly, and on his bright face, streams of blood flowed from his eyes, nose, and the corners of his mouth. His black long hair seemed to have gained its own vitality, floating upwards and becoming slightly thicker.
This was the backlash from directly viewing the fate of a Mythical Creature.
Not only did one of his eyes go blind immediately, but his entire person became like a marionette, temporarily unable to think or move.
Almost simultaneously, Zaratulstra's Historical Void image became semi-transparent, with ripples appearing on its surface.
It was as if some accident had prevented the spirituality of Zaratulstra's main body from penetrating the Realm of Mysteries to maintain the existence of the historical projection.
In the blink of an eye, Zaratulstra's Historical Void image faded to invisibility, completely dissipating.
Without His presence, Lumian finally recovered.
His blue eye, covered in a blood mist, saw the black curtain enveloping this area rapidly collapsing. He saw that male marionette, having lost the control of Zaratulstra's Historical Void image and being isolated from Zaratulstra's main body by the Realm of Mysteries, standing still, motionless.
Taking advantage of the Realm of Mysteries not yet completely collapsing, Lumian took out a mirror, reflected that marionette, and cursed it with the Fire of Destruction.
The male marionette immediately erupted with black flames suppressing madness and destruction from the inside out, its body beginning to melt like steel.

Lumian didn't look at him again. After the Realm of Mysteries further collapsed, he used the ability of Mirror Traversal to return to the area behind the mirror.
Just as Zaratulstra approached the glass mirror surface, He sensed movement behind Him.
This maggot vortex, clad in black formal wear and extending numerous bizarre tentacles, suddenly turned around to see Lumian, one eye covered in blood, the other unfocused, with blood flowing from them.
Although Lumian didn't directly look at this complete Mythical Creature, only glancing towards the black shoes where things were vaguely crawling out, he still fell into intermittent thought stutters and slight mental confusion.
His tendency towards madness worsened.
At this moment, he had already retrieved the Sword of Courage with invisible spider silk. Holding this iron-black straight sword burning with scarlet flames in both hands, he was about to strike at Zaratulstra from a distance.
After overcoming difficulties and launching several waves of attacks, he and his teammates had finally taken out Zaratulstra's marionette and Historical Void image, and could now challenge His main body!
Within the dark vortex that formed Zaratulstra's head, each worm emitted an elderly voice.
The words they spoke came together, forming echoing speech in just one second.
"To be able to end my Historical Void image in such a short time, I'm indeed a bit surprised.
"But it doesn't matter, I'll just summon another one."
As He spoke, Zaratulstra extended a bizarre, slimy tentacle and dragged out another version of Himself from the fog of history.
This was still him as a Sequence 1 Attendant of Mysteries.
If it weren't for His concern about the hidden enemy who used the power of Distortion to transfer Him to the mirror world, Zaratulstra felt He could have killed this group entirely, rather than just thinking about escaping this place.
At this moment, Lumian couldn't help but feel a bit of despair.
Zaratulstra still has the spirituality to summon a Historical Void image?
Is this what an Angel is? Even suppressed to Sequence 7, so many of us have only taken out His marionette, not even scratching His skin!
Courage and madness occupied Lumian's body. Without fear, he slashed out a highly compressed scarlet fire serpent towards

Zaratulstra and His Historical Void image from a distance.

Chapter 980: Together

Faced with the giant fire serpent slashed out by Lumian, Zaratulstra's Historical Void image had not yet fully emerged from the fog of history and was unable to respond effectively. Meanwhile, the countless transparent maggots within the dark vortex of Zaratulstra's main body merely watched, taking no action.

The highly compressed scarlet fire serpent had not yet truly approached Zaratulstra's main body when it suddenly changed direction, curving to the side, as if unwilling to conflict with this complete Mythical Creature.

This was the power of a "miracle".

Zaratulstra's previously made wish that "no one else will interfere with him" was still in effect, still functioning!

Although Lumian possessed a certain degree of godhood, the power of the wish was unable to prevent him from leaving the Realm of Mysteries and returning to this area behind the mirror. However, it could still prevent him from directly affecting Zaratulstra's main body, causing all his attacks to bypass the target.

At this moment, Lumian suddenly raised his head.

But he wasn't looking at Zaratulstra's Mythical Creature form. Instead, he was looking at the glass mirror surface not far from Zaratulstra.

His eye, covered in a blood mist due to burst capillaries, turned iron-black, reflecting the glass mirror surface that represented the entrance and exit, reflecting the pale spots on it.

This was the mirror's own weakness.

Immediately after, Lumian, wearing a silver-white earring on his left ear and his black hair floating gently, smiled and raised the Sword of Courage in his hand.

The giant fire serpent that had bypassed Zaratulstra's main body changed direction accordingly, fiercely pouncing towards the pale spot on the glass mirror surface.

The distance between them was extremely short. Before Zaratulstra's main body could react, the highly compressed scarlet fire serpent hit the target area.

Zaratulstra's head, composed of countless maggots forming a vortex, turned towards that spot, seeming somewhat stunned by Lumian's choice.

Once the mirror surface shattered, the corresponding area behind the mirror would collapse with it. If the people and objects in that area couldn't escape in time through the mirror tunnels, they would be swallowed by the turbulence of the mirror world and

dragged into its depths. The dangers there were fatal for Beyonders without a complete Mythical Creature form, meaning Lumian!
Even for Angels with complete Mythical Creature forms, unless they were of the Door pathway or the Demoness pathway, the depths of the mirror world were places they were reluctant to venture into lightly.
Seeing this scene, Lumian's smile grew increasingly manic.
I never intended to attack you at all!
My initial goal was to shatter the mirror corresponding to this area, dragging you down into the depths of the mirror world, into dangerous space-time turbulence!
And to prevent you from detecting my true intentions, I pretended to attack you directly. That strange interference helped me save a lot of spirituality. Otherwise, even as a Pyromaniac wearing the Lie earring, changing the direction of the fire serpent midway would have been very strenuous and consumed a lot!
Boom!
The scarlet giant serpent, carrying the effects of Cull and Mighty Blow, exploded thunderously at the weak spot on the inside of the mirror, stirring up violent winds.
Amidst the gale, the sound of cracking was drowned out as the mirror instantly shattered into pieces, causing the entire area behind the mirror to collapse with a thunderous roar.
This dark, void world crumbled.
Neither Lumian nor Zaratulstra's main body managed to enter that spider web-like illusory tunnel. They plummeted sharply towards the unseen bottom of the darkness, not knowing where it led.
The collapse of this mirror world also brought intense shock waves to the historical fog that had previously permeated this place. Zaratulstra's Historical Void image returned to formlessness before it could be fully dragged out.
As they fell rapidly, Lumian's body became very light, noticeably slowing his descent.
He could already see the dark storm raging below, seemingly able to tear apart everything, and he was about to be engulfed by it.
He activated the black mark on his right shoulder, vanishing from the current void with a whoosh.
His figure didn't appear in the outside world. He didn't use a Demoness's control over the mirror world or the Spiritual World Traversal ability from Hand Bro to escape this dangerous place before being caught in the space-time turbulence. Instead, he Blinked to Zaratulstra's side.
Invisible spider silk then became visible, layer upon layer binding

the maggot vortex clad in black formal wear.
After escaping from the Realm of Mysteries, Lumian had been secretly producing spider silk, letting it surround Zaratulstra's main body. When the area behind the mirror collapsed, these transparent spider threads immediately entangled the target, disregarding the corruption and effects brought by the Mythical Creature form on itself, making contact with Zaratulstra's main body.
It was through this contact, relying on the positioning provided by the Demoness's spider silk, that Lumian was able to find Zaratulstra's main body in this chaotic and dangerous space-time and Teleport to His side.
Those spider threads slowly and jerkily entangled Zaratulstra, while Lumian, positioned beside Him, closed his eyes and slashed the Sword of Courage towards the maggot vortex clad in black formal wear, following the pull of the spider silk.
The scarlet flames on this iron-black straight sword silently turned pitch black, restraining violence and madness.
Fire of Destruction!
As Lumian drew closer to Zaratulstra's main body, even with his eyes closed, his thoughts became sluggish, and the Sword of Courage he was slashing noticeably slowed.
This was the corruption brought by the Mythical Creature form, which was also a kind of marionettization.
Now, it took Zaratulstra 20 seconds to gain initial control over a target's Spirit Body Threads, but with the impact and corruption of the Mythical Creature form added, it only took 7 seconds!
From the moment Lumian left the Realm of Mysteries, He had been secretly diverting attention to manipulate the other's Spirit Body Threads!
As expected... it's like this... The manic smile didn't disappear from Lumian's bright face.
He activated the black mark on his right shoulder once again.
And now, he was depending on how Zaratulstra's main body was bound to the invisible spider silk.
In other words, his Teleportation would bring Zaratulstra along with him!
He wanted to go somewhere together with Zaratulstra!
Zaratulstra suddenly had a sense of danger. He abandoned manipulating Lumian's Spirit Body Threads and was about to use Paper Figurine Substitutes to escape the binding of the spider silk, and then leave this area that was about to be swallowed by space-time turbulence using the Secrets Sorcerer Sealed Artifact he carried.

At this moment, in a virtual tunnel of the mirror world, Bernadette, sitting on a green pea vine, was making a phone call while looking at a mirror.
That mirror was a substitute Lumian had made for himself, having a very close connection with him. It was relying on this connection and the abilities of the Mystery Pryer pathway that Bernadette was able to monitor every move on the battlefield.
She suddenly reached out her right hand and once again virtually wiped the dark crown she had taken out again.
The numerous gems on that crown lit up simultaneously, using Lumian's mirror to Disorder the corresponding space-time.
Zaratulstra first turned into a paper figurine, then His main body reappeared in the same position, still bound by spider silk.
This was the last bit of help Bernadette could provide.
Lumian's figure disappeared from the dark void that was about to be swallowed by space-time turbulence, taking Zaratulstra with him.
The two of them appeared on the surface of the large screen on the hot pot restaurant's stage and passed through it.
Zaratulstra then saw the private room that belonged to his group, saw tables of customers eating hot pot.
Thankfully, it's not the police station... Zaratulstra immediately contracted the maggot vortex, quickly changing back into a white-haired elderly man.
He was worried that his Mythical Creature form would cause massive casualties and madness in the public setting of the hot pot restaurant. If that happened, He would certainly be captured by the main consciousness of the dream and forcibly kicked out or turned into a marionette, which could no longer be avoided by historical projection.
Just as Zaratulstra regained human form, He suddenly saw a pair of eyes, dark brown eyes.
Those were Zhou Mingrui's eyes.
Zhou Mingrui was sitting at a table not far from the stage, staring blankly as he watched Zaratulstra and a beautiful woman with a bloody face walk out from the screen. He felt that a dangerous aura lingered on the former, as if he had just emerged from a state that could kill everyone in the hot pot restaurant.
This deeply shocked him, and the goose intestine he was holding with his chopsticks, not yet placed in the pot, froze in midair.
Outside the hot pot restaurant, the sky at 7 pm was still bright.
Zaratulstra's gaze instantly froze.
The next second, he turned his head to look at Lumian.
One of Lumian's eyes had lost focus, dazed and confused, while the

other blue eye was shrouded in a bloody mist.
He put away the Sword of Courage and smirked at Zaratulstra, a dangerous yet beautiful smile playing on his lips.
Both of them felt pain simultaneously, as if tightly entangled by invisible tentacles, forcibly being dragged away from the world they relied on for survival.
Their thoughts were also rapidly becoming sluggish and stuttering.
Confirming that the situation was as he had anticipated, Lumian smiled even more happily.
Zaratulstra didn't put up much more resistance, as that would prevent Him from entering the dream again later.
He took a deep look at the Demoness of Despair before him, then left this world along with the force kicking Him out of the dream.
Lumian did the same.
Clap, clap, clap, warm applause suddenly came from all directions in the hot pot restaurant.
Whether that scene of the beautiful woman and the old man walking out of the screen was magic or an application of virtual reality technology, it was worth applauding!
What the audience didn't notice was that behind Zaratulstra, an illusory door discreetly appeared, and Ludwig, dressed in children's formal wear, walked out.
People and objects banished by the Secrets Sorcerer ability, when the time was up, didn't return to their original position but to the side of the person who used the Exile ability.
Ludwig glanced at Lumina and Zaratulstra in front of him, quickly changing his mouth back to its original form.
He walked around to the front and took Lumina's hand.
Lumina remembered that this was her child. Under Ludwig's guidance, she left the stage and walked towards the back of the hot pot restaurant—the resting place for the face-changing performers.
Zaratulstra looked at his position in confusion, and amidst the audience's applause, he also walked off the stage, heading towards the second floor.
After walking seven or eight steps, he saw the stairs, and for some unknown reason, his mood suddenly became joyful.
At this moment, he heard a "bang" sound.
A dim green bullet flew from somewhere above, hitting the side of his head.
On the surface of the glass window in the corner of the second floor, Franca's figure faintly appeared.
Located in the blind spot of surveillance, she had extended the Inevitable Gun slightly out of the glass mirror surface.

Certain Death!
As the gun fired, Zaratulstra's pupils suddenly dilated, and his head exploded, splattering red and white in all directions.
Franca quickly withdrew the Inevitable Gun and calmly left the current glass window using the remaining power of the Ice Amulet.
We may not be able to kill your main body, but can't we kill your dream manifestation?
Without this current identity, let's see how you obtain money and resources, see how long it takes you to get a new identity and return to the dream city!

Chapter 981: Wrapping Up

At a table near the stage, Zhou Mingrui had been observing Zaratulstra and the unknown beautiful woman ever since they walked out from the screen.

Unlike the majority of people who were drawn to the woman with blood on her face, a dazed look in her eyes, and an strangely alluring beauty, he was more focused on Zaratulstra's state and actions.

Of course, during this process, he still used his peripheral vision to keep an eye on the woman, to see her condition and what she would do next.

After just a few seconds, he noticed a strange child appear from behind Zaratulstra, take the hand of the blood-faced woman, walk off the stage, and head towards the resting area for the face-changing performers. Meanwhile, Zaratulstra also looked confused, slowly following them off the stage and approaching the stairs leading to the second floor.

Zhou Mingrui noticed that Zaratulstra's pace quickened as he walked, his expression gradually becoming relaxed and showing a hint of joy.

Just then, he heard a "bang" and saw Zaratulstra's head explode like a watermelon dropped from a great height.

As red and white matter splattered in all directions, the applause, cheers, and chatter in the hot pot restaurant seemed to have been muted, disappearing instantly.

Everything froze or solidified in that moment, except for the fragments of Zaratulstra's head mixed with red and white liquid, blossoming like fireworks.

Thud!

Zaratulstra's corpse fell not far from the stairs.

Zaratulstra is dead... shot to death... In that moment, Zhou Mingrui was extremely confused and bewildered, feeling as if a movie special effect had intruded into daily life, making it all seem very unreal.

In all his life, this was the first time he had witnessed someone being shot to death.

He usually had full confidence in public safety and felt very secure.

The next second, Zhou Mingrui thought of the Li Ming, Luo Fu, and Luo Shan group who had been constantly reminding him to be careful of Zaratulstra. He also remembered that Luo Fu, who had been eating hot pot here just a few minutes ago, had gone to the restroom.

What a coincidence, she just happened to not be in the dining

hall...
It couldn't have been her, could it?
Just as this thought flashed through Zhou Mingrui's mind, he heard screams and felt the entire hot pot restaurant in an uproar.
Just as this thought flashed through Zhou Mingrui's mind, he heard screams and felt the entire hot pot restaurant in an uproar.
People had finally reacted.
A bloody shooting had just occurred right before their eyes!
Some people immediately called the police, some tried to leave the hot pot restaurant, fearing there might be more gunfire, while others, both nauseated and terrified, wiped the stains from their faces...
"What happened?" Zhou Mingrui suddenly heard Luo Fu's voice.
This beautiful woman wearing a black T-shirt with sequins and black-framed glasses had returned to her original position.
Luo Shan abruptly stood up, pointing at where Zaratulstra had fallen, and said in a terrified and stammering voice, "S-someone died!
"Zaratulstra was shot dead!"
Seeing Luo Shan's reaction, Zhou Mingrui doubted his earlier judgment: Luo Shan seems completely unprepared for Zaratulstra's shooting...
"Huh?" Franca, taking advantage of her height, stood on tiptoes to look towards where the body lay.
After seeing the corpse with its head blown apart, her face gradually turned pale, and she hurriedly averted her gaze.
"It's really Zaratulstra?" she asked Luo Shan.
At this point, Luo Shan also suspected it was Luo Fu's doing, because inviting Zhou Mingrui to this hot pot restaurant and sitting near the stage were both Luo Fu's instructions. And just minutes before Zaratulstra was shot, Luo Fu had gone to the restroom and wasn't at her seat.
But Luo Fu's reaction and the change in her complexion made Luo Shan uncertain.
Luo Shan nodded with a grave expression. "Yes."
She was indeed scared. Since becoming a Beyonder, at most she had only killed monsters in the Shaman's world and subtly influenced a few people in reality through her paintings. She had never truly fought with any human, let alone killed one.
She knew Luo Fu and the others' purpose and target, but she hadn't expected them to use such drastic measures.
As she spoke, Luo Shan leaned closer to Franca, wanting to sniff her to check for any lingering gunpowder smell, like they did on TV. But she only caught a whiff of a pleasant, intoxicating

fragrance.
Franca's face seemed to pale even more as she murmured, "How did he just die..."
Amidst the commotion in the entire hot pot restaurant, Zhou Mingrui's gaze moved from Luo Shan and Luo Fu's faces to the resting area for the face-changing performers.
He hadn't forgotten about the beautiful yet dangerous woman who had walked out of the screen along with Zaratulstra.
Inside the hot pot restaurant's rest area.
Lumina was led by Ludwig to a corner, where he drew a curtain, as if they were about to change clothes.
The face-changing performers present were all attracted by Lumina's beauty, aura, and dazed expression. No one questioned why she had come in.
After blocking the surrounding gazes, Ludwig took out a mirror from his pocket.
Inside the mirror, Jenna was already waiting.
Jenna reached out with both hands, grabbing Lumina and Ludwig, and pulled them into the mirror world.
Lumina didn't resist; she remembered this was Li Lu's mother.
What confused her was that she thought she was Li Lu's mother, so why did Li Lu have another mother? Yet her memories and consciousness told her this was the truth.
Smack!
As the mirror fell towards the ground, it burst into quiet and eerie black flames, then shattered into pieces.
Having already traversed to a mirror near the Dechuang Garden, Jenna began cleaning the makeup off herself and Ludwig, and removed the Lie earring from Lumina's ear.
Their action plan for this operation was divided into three parts:
The first part was to attempt an assassination;
The second part was to immediately switch to an encirclement attack if the assassination failed;
The third part, if the encirclement attack still couldn't kill Zaratulstra, was to "bring" the enemy before Zhou Mingrui in a way involving mysticism and Beyonder powers. This would likely result in both Zaratulstra and the person who "brought" Him being kicked out of the dream on the spot. Then, Franca, who hadn't appeared or participated in the battle before, would seize the opportunity to covertly assassinate Zaratulstra's dream image—now an ordinary person without an Angel's rank and temporarily unprotected by bodyguards. This would force this character off the stage, no longer able to be used by the real Zaratulstra to approach Huang Tao and obtain money and resources through company

mergers and restructuring!
Moreover, this might even prevent Zaratul from re-entering the dream city for a considerable time, until He had a new identity. Lumian and the others would use this window of opportunity to make more attempts.
Because there was a possibility of being exposed to the audience at the end, and also the possibility of the plan failing with Zaratulstra successfully escaping, so except for Lumian who could transform into a female form and Franca who would only carry out the covert assassination in the final stage, Jenna, Anthony, and Ludwig all used the Lie earring to adjust their appearances to some extent, applying near-perfect makeup. Additionally, they used Lumian's Mystery Prying Glasses to add suggestive power to their disguises, making everyone who saw them believe this was their true appearance.
The Mystery Prying Glasses itself was not above Sequence 7, so the mystical effects it produced were not discounted.
In the hot pot restaurant, Mr. Huang, who was on the phone with his daughter, heard the gunshot and commotion in the hall and specifically walked to the stairway to look down.
His face, which had been wearing a faint smile, instantly darkened when he saw Zaratulstra's nearly headless corpse.
He moved the phone from his ear to in front of his eyes, staring at the call interface displaying the words "Bernie".
After a few seconds, Mr. Huang brought the phone back to his ear and said in a gentle voice, "Something's happened at the scene, I need to deal with it. I'll call you back later."
As soon as he hung up the phone, Zaratulstra's subordinates rushed past him in fear, panic, and anger, surrounding the corpse.
Edward—the vice president of Intis Group—followed behind them, approaching Mr. Huang and saying in a low voice, "Besides Zaratulstra, one bodyguard and one negotiator are missing."
Mr. Huang nodded slowly, looking at the chaos in the hall, and sighed. "Call the police, let them handle it."
...
As soon as she resumed her daily appearance in the dream city, Jenna took Lumina and Ludwig back to room 2303 of the Dechuang Garden.
She had used her Ice Mirror Charm once again; now only one use remained.
She then placed Franca's Traveler's Bag on the coffee table.
Franca had gone to the women's restroom under surveillance, used a mirror placed on the water tank to lurk in the surveillance blind spot, shot and killed Zaratulstra, then immediately drank the

healing agent provided by the Tarot Club to delay the negative effects of using the special ability of the Inevitable Gun. This would allow the severe illness to manifest after she had been questioned by the police. Of course, before that, her complexion would still show some changes.

After doing this, she quickly handed over the Traveler's Bag and all items related to Beyonders to Jenna, letting Jenna take them away from the scene to prevent the police from discovering any clues.

Jenna took out a bottle of healing agent and handed it to the confused Lumina, saying in a gentle voice, "First, let's treat your wounds."

Lumina took the agent and trustingly opened the cap, tilted her head back slightly, and drank it.

Watching this scene, Jenna was actually quite anxious inside.

She discovered a problem that hadn't been anticipated before.

Lumian had exited the dream in female form, leaving behind Lumina, but the identity woven by Madam Justice was Li Ming, a male.

Normally, when an outsider was kicked out of the dream, their remaining manifestation would maintain daily life based on the woven identity and memories not involving Beyonders, just like "Luo Fu". But now, Lumina and the Li Ming identity were clearly different, even in gender.

This would cause a conflict between Lumina's self-perception and the actual identity situation!

Does this count as actively creating a dream loophole? Seeing that Lumina had quickly recovered, Jenna carefully asked, "Can you still... transform into a male?"

Chapter 982: Exploiting Loopholes

Lumina looked at Jenna with her now fully recovered eye and asked in confusion, "What do you mean by transforming into a male?"

Her previously blinded eye, limited by the effects of the healing agent, was still suppressed at Sequence 7 and recovering more slowly, with vision still blurry.

As expected, she can't do it, or doesn't know how... Jenna's thoughts raced as she quickly fabricated an excuse. "Don't you remember that you like to dress up as a man and wear men's clothes?"

Lumina looked down at her clothes and accepted Jenna's explanation. "Yes, I still like that."

She believed it... She's accepted this character setting? Jenna vaguely grasped the current loophole and probed further, "You seem a bit shaken and confused. Don't tell me you've forgotten that we're a couple raising Li Lu together?"

"Uh..." Lumina was stunned for a moment. "No wonder he calls me mother and you mom. I remember now, that's right!"

She just "remembered" like that? The corner of Jenna's mouth twitched slightly.

Lumina's reaction and changes also confirmed her theory: Due to the conflict between Lumina's true gender and background identity, a loophole had appeared in the dream. Before this loophole was patched, whatever character background story was fed to Lumina, she would become that person!

Of course, this couldn't involve the supernatural or conflict with actual character relationships—Lumina clearly remembered the people around her.

Recalling that she had brought Lumina and Ludwig back through the mirror world, Jenna felt a headache coming on, unsure what kind of changes such details might bring.

After a few seconds of thought, she decided not to mention the mirror world or why Lumina was injured for now, waiting for Lumina to bring it up herself before coming up with an explanation.

She pointed to the bedroom and said, "You look exhausted, and you're not fully recovered. Let me help you to bed to rest."

Lumina nodded slightly.

Jenna then helped her up and said to Ludwig, "You did well today. You can rest for a while before studying. There's food in the bag."

"Okay." Ludwig had been waiting for these words.

He quickly reached out and grabbed Jenna's Traveler's Bag.

After settling Ludwig and tucking Lumina into bed under the air-conditioned blanket, Jenna went to the bathroom to wet a towel to wipe Lumina's face, which still had traces of blood.
Just as she wet the towel, she saw Anthony's figure appear in the vanity mirror.
Jenna immediately felt relieved and turned off the faucet, saying, "I was just about to look for you after settling Lumina and the others. Are you all right?"
She used the name Lumina to quickly inform Anthony of what had happened afterwards.
Anthony asked a follow-up question as if to confirm, "What about Zaratulstra?"
"The third part of the plan was successfully executed," Jenna replied concisely.
Only then did Anthony describe his own experience, "I was transferred to a prison that clearly had defenses against Mirror Traversal. I Hypnotized my 'cellmate' to feel unwell and call for help loudly. Then, using Psychological Invisibility, I slipped out of the cell and made it to the guards' office area, where I finally managed to escape using the mirror I had on me and the Ice Mirror Charm.
"When I returned to the mirror world corresponding to the hot pot restaurant, I found you had already left, so I came here to confirm the situation. There are already police there, and the area behind the mirror might not be safe."
"You can clean off your makeup and return to your original appearance now," Jenna said as she tossed the Lie earring into the mirror. "I've already done anti-divination using mirror magic, and Queen Mystic will help with the aftermath. Don't worry, go home and rest. I'll keep Ludwig here for now."
"Alright." While the power of the Ice Mirror Charm was still active, Anthony took the Lie earring and traversed back to the rented apartment in Xinhong District.
He could only use his Ice Mirror Charm one more time as well.
Jenna let out a sigh, wrung out the towel, left the bathroom, entered the bedroom, and began wiping Lumina's face.
Along the way, she also checked how much Ludwig had eaten.
...
In the hot pot restaurant, the police had set up a cordon, isolating the corpse and the surrounding area.
Franca, looking shocked, was being questioned along with Luo Shan and Zhou Mingrui by a police officer named Li En.
She said fearfully, "We weren't eating quickly, waiting for the later performance. Then I went to the bathroom, and when I came back,

I found someone had died!"
"So you weren't in the dining hall when it happened?" Li En probed.
"Yes, I was in the bathroom," Franca explained.
Li En made a note of this, deciding to check with his colleague monitoring the surveillance footage later to confirm if this woman named Luo Fu had indeed entered the women's restroom and how long she had stayed there.
He then turned to Zhou Mingrui.
"You saw the deceased and a woman walk out from the screen?"
"Yes." Zhou Mingrui glanced at Luo Fu.
After listening and observing for a while, he increasingly felt that Luo Fu didn't seem to be the culprit.
Or is her acting so superb that I can't detect any flaws? Zhou Mingrui mused as he added, "At the time, I thought it was a magic show. Thinking back now, there was something off—that woman had blood on her face..."
Li En asked a few more questions, then walked over to Officer Deng, summarizing the key points from his inquiries.
Deng held a pipe but didn't smoke it in public, only sniffing it to stimulate his nerves and make them more alert.
"Captain, we've found something," another police officer approached and said to Deng.
He was responsible for searching for the beautiful woman who had come out of the screen.
Deng nodded and followed this officer to the back of the hot pot restaurant, entering the resting room for the face-changing performers.
The performers were all a bit scared, huddled in corners, watching the police come and go.
"This is where the suspect was last seen," the officer who led Deng in pulled back a curtain, pointing to the changing area.
Deng scanned the area, his gaze falling on the shattered mirror on the ground.
...
In Trier, inside that luxurious villa.
Lumian opened his eyes to find one eye unable to sense light, while the other was tinged with a faint bloodiness.
Every joint in his body ached, his thoughts occasionally stuttering. His emotions were clearly off—despite achieving his goal, he felt a sinking depression as if trapped in inescapable darkness, along with an impulse to explode and tear everything apart.
This was the corruption from Zaratulstra's Mythical Creature form, which would affect reality, and the resulting damage was real too.
Lumian slowly stood up, confirming the presence of the Traveler's

Bag and Beyonder items, then stumbled out of the room and down the stairs.
He hadn't immediately drunk the healing agent because he was mainly corrupted, not injured.
When Lumian reached the ground floor living room, Madam Magician, dressed in a yellow and white gown, was already waiting there.
Starlight flashed in Madam Magician's eyes, condensing into an illusory book that instantly flipped to a certain page.
Accompanied by an ethereal, illusory voice, drops of sweet dew fell, sprinkling onto Lumian, washing away his blood stains without wetting his clothes.
Lumian's blinded eye gradually regained sight, and the discomfort in his body quickly dissipated.
"The best way to deal with your current condition would actually be to have Mr. Sun come and purify you," Madam Magician said with a smile, "but you have too many things that need purification, and the rank is too high. That might be even more detrimental to you. Now, your spirit and mind certainly still have residual corruption. Later, Madam Justice will come to give you a targeted treatment. Fortunately, the corruption from the dream has also been suppressed to Sequence 7. As long as you don't encounter the Celestial Worthy, it shouldn't be a major problem."
Lumian tucked his falling black hair behind his ear and briefly recounted the actions he and the others had taken against Zaratulstra, as well as the assistance provided by Queen Mystic.
During this, Madam Magician gestured for him to sit in an armchair.
"I don't know if Franca ultimately killed Zaratulstra's dream image, but it shouldn't be a big issue. At the time, Zaratulstra's bodyguards were all in the private room upstairs, and the other demigod of the Seer pathway was stationed at the hotel. Even if Mr. Fool subconsciously believed that Zaratulstra also possessed Beyonder powers, he would just be an ordinary Sequence 7, without special abilities or an Angel's rank," Lumian said finally.
Madam Magician replied, "Divination on Mr. Fool's dream situation is very restricted and dangerous. I'm not sure yet if Two of Cups was successful. Well, we can ask Miss Justice when she arrives. She can glimpse some details of the dream using her Dreamweaver ability.
"What we need to pay attention to now is that your actions were a strong stimulus to Zhou Mingrui. No one knows what changes might occur in the dream next."
Lumian nodded, saying thoughtfully, "This time, our biggest gain

wasn't kicking Zaratulstra out of the dream and likely being able to eliminate His corresponding dream manifestation. It was verifying one thing."
As Madam Magician turned her gaze to him, Lumian spoke slowly, "As long as we perform actions deeply involving Beyonders in front of Zhou Mingrui and make him feel danger, whether it's the subordinates of the Celestial Worthy or us, we'll all be kicked out of the dream and quickly marionettized.
"On this point, no matter what stance people take, they receive the same treatment."
...
Affected by the shooting incident, Zhou Mingrui, Franca, and Luo Shan couldn't continue eating hot pot.
Since many dishes hadn't been touched, Luo Shan was hesitant about how to pay the bill and how much to give.
At this moment, the hot pot restaurant manager came over and proactively said to them,
"No need to pay, no need to pay. Mr. Huang from Intis Group said he's covering everything. He said it was their client's issue that prevented everyone from enjoying their meal, so he'll foot the bill."
"Mr. Huang is as generous as ever," Zhou Mingrui remarked.
Luo Shan strongly agreed.
Seeing that Luo Fu wasn't feeling well, Zhou Mingrui didn't suggest finding another place to eat. He politely saw the two ladies off in a ride-hailing car.
Franca had been holding up, but upon returning to Dechuang Garden and entering the elevator, she suddenly went weak and leaned against Luo Shan.
"What's wrong?" Luo Shan asked in surprise.
"I seem to be... falling ill... How sudden..." Franca herself was puzzled.
Luo Shan didn't get off at the 15th floor but supported Franca to the 23rd floor.
Upon seeing the door of Room 2303, Franca suddenly "woke up".
The illness was due to using the Certain Death effect of the Inevitable Gun!
I really killed Zaratulstra...

Chapter 983: A Glimpse

Looking at the door of Room 2303, Franca suddenly recalled everything.

Considering that if the shooting of Zaratulstra was successful, the police department would inevitably be involved in the investigation. Regardless of whether the police department previously had Beyonders, now that Zhou Mingrui himself had gained Beyonder abilities and the dream subconscious recognized the Sequence 7 level, they, as representatives of the "official" side, would certainly have gained mystical power enhancements. Therefore, Lumian and the others had already thought of ways to avoid subsequent investigations.

Starting from the fact that the main officers of the dream city's Police Department were based on the Nighthawks of the Church of Evernight, Lumian reasonably deduced that their most commonly used and convenient method for finding clues in public was to forcibly drag suspects into a dream and directly question them there.

For this reason, he had Anthony give Franca a psychological suggestion in advance, making her forget everything related to the incident as soon as she drank the healing agent. The corresponding psychological suggestion would only be completely lifted when she returned to Dechuang Garden and saw the rented room.

This way, even in the dream, Franca's performance would be flawless.

If her own subconscious didn't believe she had shot Zaratulstra, how could she show any abnormality in the dream!

The performance that Luo Shan and Zhou Mingrui saw from Franca also came from her instinctive reactions, not acting. Only her complexion was enhanced by the negative effects of the Inevitable Gun, so it was completely flawless.

Phew... that shot of mine was really cool, calm, relaxed, natural, composed, that's what an assassin should be like! Franca, feeling a bit feverish and confused, proudly praised herself in her heart.

By this time, Luo Shan had already rung the doorbell and saw Jenna open the door.

She was about to ask in a low voice, "Was Zaratulstra's death your doing?" when she suddenly noticed a small boy writing furiously at the dining table.

"Who's that?" Luo Shan swallowed the question she was about to ask.

Franca let go of Luo Shan's support, glanced at Ludwig, and said

with unsteady steps and a smile, "My godson."
Theoretically speaking, that's right!
As soon as Franca finished speaking, she was already panting, looking as if even talking was a great effort. Jenna quickly supported her.
Seeing this, Luo Shan waved her hand and said, "Get well soon. You probably won't need to work overtime tomorrow, you can rest at home."
The big client is dead, what overtime would there be!
Back in Room 1502, Luo Shan took out her phone and sent a WeChat message to Jenna:
"Is there anything wrong with Luo Fu? Does she need to go to the hospital?"
She intended to use this to open the conversation, then ask Jenna if "Zaratulstra's death was related to them".
Jenna quickly replied: "She took some fever medicine, let's observe for a while before deciding.
"I heard there was a shooting at the hot pot restaurant where you were eating?"
She instead asked about Zaratulstra being shot... *What does this mean? Could it really not have been them?* Luo Shan wondered, once again doubting her own deductions.
She briefly told Jenna about what happened in the hot pot restaurant, watching to see how she would respond.
Jenna sent a 🙏 emoji: "No wonder Luo Fu got sick. She always falls ill when frightened, but she also recovers quickly. She'll be fine in a couple of days."
That doesn't make sense... She's a powerful Beyonder, from a future on the edge of the apocalypse; she must have seen countless deaths. How could she get sick from being frightened by a single shooting? Just as Luo Shan had this doubt, she suddenly understood what Jenna really meant: We'll tell you the truth about this matter in a couple of days.
Is it because this is the crucial period of the police investigation, and they're worried that if I know who the real killer is, I might let something slip or become nervous and anxious, and then be questioned by the police? Luo Shan nodded in understanding.
She then felt somewhat happy.
In the past, she wouldn't have been able to pick up on such hints. Sometimes when others mocked her, if it wasn't obvious enough, she wouldn't even realize it. But now, she had grasped the hidden meaning in the words!
Ah, I've grown too. Luo Shan leaned back on the sofa contentedly and started using her phone.

Soon, she saw the police announcement soliciting key information, part of which read: "This woman is involved in the case. We hope the public will actively provide clues..."
Next to this part of the content was a photo. The woman in the photo was the one who had walked out of the screen with Zaratulstra.
Luo Shan could clearly see that the photo came from someone's phone at the scene rather than from surveillance cameras. It captured the woman's exquisite and elegant features, her confused yet seductive gaze, and her blood-stained face quite clearly, bringing that dangerous beauty to life.
Looking at it again, she's still very beautiful, even a bit more beautiful than Luo Fu and Jenna when they're not downplaying themselves... Luo Shan mused as she scrolled through the comments:
"Such a beautiful woman, why become a villain?"
"I'm not just judging by her looks, but I feel like there's no way she'd kill someone for no reason, right?"
"Sister, give me a shot!"
"Do all the commenters let their morals follow their appendages?"
"Isn't she more beautiful than those female celebrities nowadays? She could definitely squeeze into the top tier!"
"This is my dream lover, her face stained with blood, holding a gun, pressing it against my head, forcing me to give up my true heart."
"So, who exactly was killed?"
Luo Shan scrolled through with a smile for a few minutes, then suddenly remembered something.
She had forgotten to check the details of the room.
Ever since Luo Fu and Jenna reminded her to be careful of Zaratulstra's group potentially attacking her in secret, every time she returned home, she would use her Beyonder ability to examine the details of every corner, to avoid being assassinated or ambushed.
Luo Shan stood up and walked to the oil painting of a parrot, extending her hand towards it.
The colorful parrot poked its beak and upper body out of the oil painting and said crisply, "No one has been here."
Luo Shan stroked the parrot's feathers, then turned and walked to the window.
She looked outside, raised her right hand, and pinched her eye socket.
She wanted to use a Reporter's ability to observe and uncover the true world.

This wasn't because she didn't trust the parrot, but because there were some intrusions the parrot couldn't detect.
However, she didn't dare to observe the true world for too long. Every time she used this ability, she felt danger and only dared to maintain it for about ten seconds.
This could only be used to look at the "corners" that the parrot couldn't reach.
The next second, the light and shadows before Luo Shan's eyes changed, and different scenes of the surrounding area overlapped in a strange way, presenting themselves in a chaotic and complex manner.
Luo Shan quickly saw the glass windows connecting to the dark world, saw the oil paintings pressed against the glass windows, saw different rooms stacked together like building blocks, saw people doing different things in different rooms yet mixing with each other, saw the thin gray fog permeating the edges of all these scenes.
What exactly is this fog... Luo Shan instinctively frowned.
Every time she used a Reporter's ability to observe reality, she would discover this thin gray fog, but she never knew what it symbolized, what it represented, or where it came from.
Just as Luo Shan noticed that the movements of a man in one of the rooms seemed to stutter, the colorful parrot fluttered its wings in her line of sight.
Then, she saw Luo Fu lying on the sofa, physically cooling herself with an ice pack.
Then, she heard Luo Fu's weak voice: "Is this what happens after being kicked out of the dream in a female identity?"
Kicked out of the dream... Luo Shan was stunned.
The scene before her eyes immediately shattered.
She instinctively ended her observation of "reality".
Luo Shan stood by the window, her expression bewildered as she recalled what she had just heard.
Kicked out of the dream? Did Luo Fu mean to say this is a dream? Was her condition last time because she was kicked out of the dream? Luo Shan's gaze gradually became vacant.
After a few seconds, she murmured very softly and weakly, "If this is a dream, then what am I..."
...
Late at night, the bedroom door where Franca and Lumina were sleeping opened silently, and a figure walked out without making any noise.
It was Lumina in her nightgown, her eyes like highland lakes, both confused and irritated.

Lumina walked along the darkest areas, stealthily reaching the door and unlocking it.
Then, she put her hand on the handle, trying to open the main door.
But the handle didn't move at all.
Is the lock broken? Just as Lumina showed a surprised expression, she heard Jenna's voice from behind. "Where are you going?"
Lumina turned around quickly, looking at Jenna. "Didn't you take Li Lu to An Ruide's place?"
"We later came back, but you were all asleep. I thought I shouldn't disturb you, so I just slept here on the sofa." Jenna stood up from the sofa and asked curiously, "You want to go out? It's the middle of the night."
"I-I feel very stuffy, very depressed, I want to go out for a walk," Lumina explained, "But the door lock is broken."
She then laughed self-mockingly. "Am I too unlucky?"
Being unlucky is normal, and inevitable, this is the negative impact of using the Circle Inhabitant effect... Jenna didn't explain, but shook her head and said, "The hot pot restaurant incident isn't over yet, and your body hasn't fully recovered. If you go out for a walk now and someone sees you, it will be very troublesome."
"Alright." Lumina pursed her lips and said, "I-I feel like there's always a voice, an impulse in my heart telling me to go out."
"A voice?" Jenna frowned, becoming more vigilant, "Go where?"
Lumina didn't conceal.
"On the one hand, I want to go to the rooftop, to feel the wind, to see if there are any stars, and to space out a bit. On the other hand, I want to go to a certain place, that place is calling me."
"Which place?" Jenna asked.
Lumina tried hard to recall. "I think it was... I think it was..."
She paused for a moment, finally remembering. "Mushu Hospital."
"Mushu Hospital." Jenna's pupils dilated slightly.
She suddenly remembered that Lumian, that is, Lumina, really did have the bloodline of Omebella, the Child of God—the Great Mother.
This wasn't a ruse to deceive Grimm and the others!

Chapter 984: A Tranquil Night

Jenna's mind instantly tensed up. She decided to placate Lumina and not give her the opportunity to go to Mushu Hospital, until Lumian returned around 7 or 8 pm the next evening.

She looked at Lumina and said sincerely, "The investigation into the hot pot restaurant shooting hasn't ended yet. If you go to Mushu Hospital, you might be taken to the police station. Even if the police can prove you're not related to Zaratulstra's death, it will take a considerable amount of time. You'll be detained for at least a few days, which could cause you to lose your job."

Hearing the phrase "lose your job", Lumina showed a not-so-obvious expression of fear.

"Yes, I should hide for a couple of days. After that, going to work disguised as a man shouldn't be a problem."

She had already been instilled with the setting of working as a security guard while disguised as a man.

Jenna didn't dare to relax. She glanced at the curtains blocking the bright moonlight and said to Lumina,

"We can't go to Mushu Hospital, but we can go to the rooftop to feel the breeze and relax a bit."

"Okay," Lumina said, an uncontrollable smile appearing on her clean and clear face.

Jenna first fixed the door lock, then took Lumina out of Room 2303 and to the rooftop via the elevator and stairs.

Throughout the process, she hid a mirror in each hand, using them to reflect light and create illusions to conceal herself and Lumina from the surveillance cameras.

Feeling the cool breeze that had lost its scorching heat in the night, Lumina half-closed her eyes and took two deep breaths.

She then walked to the parapet wall at the edge of the rooftop, pointed at the top, and asked for Jenna's opinion, "Can I sit up there?"

"Normal people can't since it's very dangerous. But you're fine, your sense of balance is very good, even better than acrobats," Jenna wasn't afraid of Lumina falling. She had enough ability to rescue her, so she wanted to see if the loophole hadn't been patched yet, and if by constantly suggesting to Lumina that she had abilities beyond ordinary people, whether Lumina would actually possess Beyonder powers.

Lumina put her hands on top of the parapet wall and lightly jumped up, preparing to sit down.

Suddenly, her hand slipped, and she lost her balance, about to fall towards the ground a hundred meters below.

At that moment, she felt several invisible ropes pulling at her, helping her stabilize.
"Phew, that scared me to death..." She turned her body sideways, looked at Jenna who was already sitting nearby, and patted her chest.
She thought Jenna had caught her.
Jenna, who had lightly wrapped Lumina with invisible spider silk for protection, realized she had overlooked something.
This person was still under the negative effects of misfortune brought by the Circle of Binding. Even if she had gained excellent balance based on Jenna's suggestions, she would fail due to extreme bad luck.
"Be careful," Jenna specially cautioned.
Lumina responded tersely and nodded lightly.
She looked at the lit internal roads of the residential area below for a few seconds, then raised her head, casting her gaze towards the bright moon in the sky.
The moonlight and the city's light pollution had hidden the stars from view.
Lumina supported herself with both hands on top of the parapet wall, quietly looking at the moon, completely absorbed.
After an unknown amount of time, she suddenly said, as if talking to herself, "A poem came to mind."
She didn't turn her head or look at Jenna, still gazing at the bright moon in the sky.
"What poem?" Jenna was enjoying the current peace and tranquility.
Lumina maintained her contemplative posture and said in a slightly ethereal voice, "Raising my head, I see the bright shining moon,
Bowing my head, I think of my hometown."
...
At the Police Department, in a certain meeting room, the lights were still bright late at night.
Lun Xiande stood in front of the whiteboard, pointing at two photos and said, "We can make a judgment that this case involves supernatural powers. The killer, or rather the criminal group, can use mirrors and the mirror world behind them."
One of the two photos was of the broken mirror in the changing room, and the other was of the shattered window in the private room where the victim was.
Officer Deng sat below, nodding lightly, indicating for Lun Xiande to continue.
"Therefore, those who were not in the hot pot restaurant's main

hall and were not under surveillance during the corresponding time period are all suspects and need further investigation.
"They likely went to surveillance blind spots, used mirrors they carried with them to sneak back into the hot pot restaurant's main hall, waiting for the victim to return from the mirror world. If the victim returned, they would deliver a fatal blow. If not, it would mean their accomplices had already succeeded."
Deng raised his hand, pointing out a flaw in Lun Xiande's reasoning.
"It's also possible that they were always lurking behind a mirror or a glass window, not having appeared in the main hall of Shujin Hot Pot Restaurant before.
"Judging from how well this group utilizes the mirror world, they didn't need to send someone to the main hall of the hot pot restaurant in advance to wait by eating hot pot. They could have waited until the time was right, or received a signal, then entered the mirror world from afar, arriving at the predetermined assassination location. Look, the woman who walked out of the screen with Zaratulstra hadn't appeared in the main hall before either."
After speaking, Deng raised his palm and sniffed the tobacco pressed in his pipe.
"Yes," Lun Xiande admitted that the captain's point was valid. "But we still need to re-investigate those who left the main hall of the hot pot restaurant during that time period but weren't recorded by surveillance cameras in the corresponding state at the time of the incident."
"Remove the latter condition," Deng thought for two seconds and said, "People who can use the mirror world can also deceive surveillance cameras. You should know that surveillance cameras record based on optical principles, and those who master mirrors are good at affecting light and creating optical illusions."
After Lun Xiande nodded, Deng turned to Li En and said, "Tell us about the preliminary investigation results."
Li En stood up, taking Lun Xiande's place.
"So far, we've used dream interrogation on seventeen people without letting them notice anything unusual.
"Luo Shan: Very surprised about Zaratulstra's death, couldn't believe it.
"Zhou Mingrui: Very cautious about Zaratulstra, but also didn't anticipate Zaratulstra's death.
"Luo Fu: She left the main hall at the time and went to the ladies' room. There's no surveillance in the bathroom, but she was also very surprised about Zaratulstra's death, clearly shocked.

"We initially listed these three as key investigation targets because they're all employees of the Intis Group. They might have been instructed by some powerful figures within the Intis Group who don't want a merger and reorganization, to assassinate Zaratulstra at Shujin Hot Pot Restaurant and disrupt the ongoing business negotiations. But none of them knew that Huang Tao and Zaratulstra were also in Shujin Hot Pot Restaurant, and Luo Shan and Zhou Mingrui never left the main hall...
"The preliminary conclusion is that they don't have any issues."
Deng expressed agreement, and Lun Xiande didn't say anything.
After thoroughly discussing the case, Deng stood up and said to his subordinates,
"Currently, there are two key points. First, investigate the remaining suspects, including those mentioned by Lun Xiande and those with substantial motives. Second, find the woman who walked out of the screen with Zaratulstra. Although she didn't attack Zaratulstra at the time, the fact that she came out of the screen itself is worth noting."
"Yes, Captain," Lun Xiande, Li En, and other officers stood up and responded.
Deng smiled and said seriously, "This involves foreign guests and major business activities. You've all worked hard. I'm going to report to Chief Yagates now."
...
After looking at the moon and feeling the night breeze for half an hour, Jenna took Lumina back to Room 2303.
"Rest now, your body hasn't fully recovered yet," Jenna said, pointing to the bedroom.
Lumina, wearing her nightgown, opened the door and entered the bedroom. She found that the sick Franca had also woken up at some point due to her absence.
"Do you feel better now?" Franca had already learned from Jenna via WeChat about what the two had done.
Lumina looked at Franca and nodded with complex emotions. "Much better."
Her emotions were complex because she remembered that Luo Fu and she were also in a romantic relationship.
Yet this didn't affect her relationship with Jenna.
I thought I was just an ordinary yuri fan... *How did the yuri circle become so messy?* Am I really a player? Lumina sat on the edge of the bed and said to Franca,
"Let's sleep, I still have to work tomorrow."
Security guards worked in shifts.
Franca looked at Lumina and said with a smile, "Did you forget?

You took two days off, Friday and Saturday. Your director, Grimm, approved it."
Lumina blinked. "Oh, right... I forgot. No wonder I don't have to work the middle shift today and can go directly to Shujin Hot Pot Restaurant in the evening..."
Looking at Lumina like this, Franca suddenly felt she was a bit adorably silly.
After the two in the bedroom went back to sleep, Jenna also lay down on the sofa, closed her eyes, and entered deep sleep.
After a while, her Astral Projection arrived in Luo Shan's Shaman world. She saw the girl still guarding by the translucent barrier, having repelled a new round of attacks from the monsters.
From the corner of her eye, Jenna saw Franca's Astral Projection wandering around in a daze like the other people around.
This indicated that Franca, due to her illness, had entered and then exited her consciousness.
Next, Jenna also found Lumina's Astral Projection, who also lacked clear consciousness.
"She really isn't a Beyonder..." Just as Jenna had this thought, she suddenly realized something.
Luo Shan must know!
It was hard to hide from her in the Shaman's "domain".
The next second, Jenna saw Luo Shan half turn her body and say to her, "So Zaratulstra was really killed by you guys."
Luo Shan had seen Lumina's Astral Projection, seen this beautiful woman who had walked out of the screen with Zaratulstra.
"Yes, we didn't tell you earlier because we were worried the police might have special methods to confirm whether you were lying," Jenna explained.
Luo Shan asked in confusion, "Wasn't Luo Fu afraid of being caught lying?"
"She was hypnotized in advance," Jenna didn't conceal.
Luo Shan fell silent. After several seconds, she asked in a low, extremely difficult tone, "Is this... is this really a dream?"

Chapter 985: I Don't Believe It

Hearing Luo Shan's question, Jenna was stunned.

Why would she suddenly ask such a question?

How did she suddenly think this was a dream?

How did she know? Who told her?

After coming to her senses, Jenna carefully asked in return, "What dream?"

Luo Shan looked at her for several seconds. "A Reporter has an ability to observe the truth, to see different scenes within a certain area, but it can't be maintained for too long. I've been using it often lately to check if anyone is hiding in my home or if there are any traps.

"When I came back in the evening, I used it once and saw you and Luo Fu talking. I heard Luo Fu asking about being kicked out of the dream."

So that's how it is... So that's what observing the truth means... Jenna's first reaction was "Don't panic, I'll make up a reason on the spot," but after seeing Luo Shan's eyes filled with deep sadness, confusion, and pain, she closed her mouth and remained silent.

Luo Shan took a moment before saying, "So, when Luo Fu suddenly became like a different person last time, it was because the consciousness from outside the dream was kicked out?

"So... this really is a dream?"

Jenna remained silent for several seconds, her tone becoming somber. "This is Zhou Mingrui's dream."

Luo Shan opened her mouth, but couldn't say anything. Her expression gradually became vacant.

Jenna continued, "Some people want Zhou Mingrui to continue sleeping until the apocalypse comes, while others want to wake him up so he can lead everyone to resist the apocalypse."

As she said these words, Jenna felt sympathy for Luo Shan while keeping her mind highly focused, waiting for the possible dream rejection that might come.

She had almost revealed the essence of the matter.

With Lumina already kicked out of the dream, Franca ill, and the police department highly focused on the horrible case of Zaratulstra's shooting, Jenna wasn't prepared to conduct further experiments.

Even if she wanted to experiment, the target would be Peng Deng or Zhou Mingrui. It was unlikely to reveal the truth to Luo Shan now. That would require a gradual, step-by-step approach.

No one would accept that they were fake, that their existence was meaningless. This would cause unpredictable shock to Luo Shan.

Jenna could hardly imagine what kind of changes this would cause in Luo Shan.
Compared to this, being kicked out of the dream wasn't a particularly serious problem. After all, she could enter again.
Of course, it would be best not to be kicked out. Otherwise, the weak and sick Franca might not be able to control Lumina and prevent her from secretly going to Mushu Hospital.
Luo Shan's lips trembled for a while before she finally said, "So, I'm just an illusory figure in someone else's dream?"
Before Jenna could respond, Luo Shan raised her hand to touch her own face, then suddenly shook her head. "I don't believe it... I don't believe it... I don't believe it! This isn't a dream, and I'm not fake!"
At this moment, Jenna wanted to persuade her to shift her attention, to find new meaning, but the words caught in her throat and she couldn't form a sentence.
Luo Shan cried out for a while before finally calming down.
She looked at Jenna again and said, "Every time, every time I observe the truth, I see grayish-white fog. It's in every scene. Wh-what is it?"
Jenna pondered for a moment and then said, "It might be, it might be the boundaries of the dream."
Luo Shan fell silent again, staring intently at Jenna's eyes as if grasping at the last straw.
She slowly lowered her head, turning her body while mumbling, "No, it's not like this... I don't believe it...
"I don't believe it..."
She completely turned her back on Jenna, facing the translucent barrier and the monsters hiding in the deep darkness beyond it alone.
...
Trier, beside the Srenzo River, in a café with outdoor seating.
Lumian wore sunglasses and had long hair draped over his shoulders. Basking in the bright sunlight, he held a cup of Intis coffee, his mind wandering as he gazed at the wide river, the classical buildings on the opposite shore, the steam-belching iron ships, the bustling and lively river island, and the occasional airship passing by, enjoying a rare moment of leisure.
He temporarily had nothing that needed to be done.
He had originally planned to take advantage of his return to the real world to visit Bansy Island, seeking special scenes that could maximize the effectiveness of the corpse wax candle. But after careful consideration, he abandoned this plan.
There were uncertain risks in Bansy Harbor. If it led to him being trapped there, unable to enter Mr. Fool's true dream, or directly

resulting in his death, it would significantly affect the subsequent progress of the awakening plan.
Lumian was clear about which of these two matters was more important.
He had also considered whether to go to the New City of Silver, enter the underground, and borrow the Grade 0 Sealed Artifact—Gift of the Land—to bring it into the dream city, enhancing the team's power. After all, for him, he could return to Mr. Fool's dream using the lucky coin regardless of where he fell asleep, and the New City of Silver was also a safe place.
In the end, Lumian erred on the side of caution and didn't make this risky attempt.
He carried Omebella's bloodline, and in the dream city, those blessed by the Great Mother like Grimm viewed him as the Great Mother's Child of God. The underground of Mushu Hospital still concealed the Great Mother's influence and erosion of the dream city. If he added the Gift of the Land transformed from the real Omebella's remains on top of that, Lumian dared not imagine what problems might arise.
He worried that as soon as he brought the Gift of the Land into the dream city, he might find his dream manifestation appearing in basement one of Mushu Hospital, with the Gift of the Land fusing with his body, allowing Omebella to be fully reborn.
And such an Omebella might be able to withstand the divine descent of the Great Mother.
Unable to do this or that, Lumian could only give himself a day off.
As for making new Ice Mirror Charms, he had to wait a bit longer, because his misfortune had not completely dissipated.
Yes, although he had used Circle Inhabitant within the dream city, after returning to reality, he still bore the negative effect of misfortune.
Correspondingly, he could only use the Circle of Binding effect of his Circle Inhabitant seven more times, and using Circle Inhabitant twice had stacked his misfortune to six hours, which didn't take effect immediately.
The types of Circle Inhabitant he used on Zaratulstra's mirror projection and Historical Void image were not the same. One was to recreate the scene, the other was to fix the position.
Is the essence of negative effects reflecting in reality that using Beyonder items in dreams causes Beyonder items in reality to be activated as well, thus producing corresponding negative effects?
Lumian took a sip of coffee, allowing his body and mind to relax.
He silently sighed. A rare moment of leisure in this fleeting life...
After a while, Lumian gazed at the gently rippling, relatively clean

water surface, breathing in the cool breeze from the river, and spontaneously thought, *Is the other 'me' also daydreaming like this now?*

He had considered the problem of identity conflict corresponding to his female form being kicked out of the dream, but he hadn't reminded Jenna and Franca about it, only telling them to be careful of the influence brought by Omebella's bloodline.

He felt that this situation might gradually awaken some of Aurore's qualities in his dream self.

...

At 8 am, Dechuang Garden.

Franca had just groggily woken up when she saw Lumina standing by the bay window, looking at the already brilliant sunlight outside, lost in thought.

After a night's rest, Franca's condition had improved considerably. She was no longer weak all over, and walking was no longer a problem.

"What... are you looking at?" she tentatively asked Lumina.

Lumina didn't turn around, her tone slightly distant as she said, "I really want to go for a walk. It's not too hot at this time."

"Let's wait for things to blow over," Franca suggested. "How about we play computer games?"

"What games?" Lumina turned around.

"..." Franca suddenly fell silent.

Without a computer, what computer games could they play?

They didn't even have a gaming console!

They had to save every penny for when they needed to rent useful items from the Star Dream Provisions Store or complete crucial tasks. In daily life, non-essential expenses were always cut wherever possible.

"Mobile games then..." As she spoke, Franca stopped again.

What games wouldn't lag on their cheap phones?

"Let's play Fighting the Landlord!" That was all she could say.

At this moment, Jenna walked in, supporting Franca to the bathroom to wash up.

After closing the bathroom door, Jenna kept an ear out for any movement outside, worried that Lumina might suddenly run out, while lowering her voice to tell Franca about Luo Shan's situation.

Franca sat on the toilet, her mouth half-open, completely stunned.

After hearing Jenna's full explanation, she sighed deeply.

"We still don't understand enough about the abilities of the Reporter Sequence..."

She could understand how Luo Shan felt now. If someone with authority told her that her life since transmigrating was fake, that

her past was also fake, that she was just an illusory character existing in a dream, she would certainly suffer a huge blow. Not having a breakdown on the spot was already quite good.
Even though they had thought about using Luo Shan to awaken Mr. Fool, Franca had previously hoped to persuade her with fabricated stories, not to tell her the truth.
Some truths were best never known.
They represented despair.
Franca pondered for a moment, then said desperately, "Can we find an excuse to cover it up? Not saying we lied to her, but designing some events to let everyone 'discover' together that the dream theory is just another layer of disguise, not the final truth. I think Luo Shan could accept such a development. People can deceive themselves about certain things. Hasn't she been saying she doesn't believe this is a dream?
"Moreover, we can't provide strong enough evidence to prove this is a dream!"
Jenna fell silent for a moment before saying, "We can only handle it this way for now. During this period, we need to find a way for Anthony to placate Luo Shan, or have him provide treatment directly."
Franca nodded lightly, suddenly showing a thoughtful expression.
She looked at Jenna and said slowly, "Based on our previous speculation, Luo Shan is a dream character shaped by Mr. Fool's divided subconscious, combined with corresponding images from memory. In a broad sense, she is equivalent to a part of Mr. Fool.
"After hearing the truth about the dream, the dream city didn't show any unusual changes, and you weren't kicked out of the dream..."

Chapter 986: Girls' Day

"Yes." Jenna also expressed confusion, "I thought I would be kicked out of the dream immediately, but nothing happened."
Franca thought for a moment and spoke, "Is it that telling the truth about this world to dream figures other than Zhou Mingrui and a few others doesn't trigger an abnormal reaction? Or is Luo Shan special, a character lightly corrupted by that evil god of the Fantasy Association, no longer closely connected to the dream's main consciousness?"
Jenna shook her head and answered honestly, "I don't know."
She paused, her eyes turning slightly as she said, "If we can pacify Luo Shan this time, we can find an opportunity later to mention Mr. Fool to her, and see if there's any special reaction, or if it causes me to be kicked out of the dream."
"We can also try telling corresponding things to other dream figures and see what results." Franca made an affirmative sound, reaching out both hands to support Jenna as she stood up from the toilet.
After finishing her washing up, she returned to the living room to see Lumina watching TV.
An idea struck her, and she said to Jenna, "Should we invite Luo Shan over to play cards? Four people can play Shengji."
"I'll ask and see if she's willing." Jenna understood that Franca wanted to find something for Luo Shan to do, some entertainment to ease her emotional state, and they could also use the card-playing opportunity to provide subtle psychological guidance.
Jenna immediately picked up her phone and sent Luo Shan a message.
After about seven or eight minutes, Luo Shan replied: "Okay, after I eat breakfast. I just woke up."
"She's willing to come," Jenna told Franca and Lumina.
Lumina knew Luo Shan, aware that she was her colleague, and quickly stood up saying, "Should I change back into men's clothes?"
"No need, no need. Just pretend you don't know her, act like you're another friend of ours," Franca hurriedly shook her head.
If she really changed into men's clothes, wouldn't that make Luo Shan think of Li Ming?
After all, you two do look a bit alike!
Of course, as long as Lumina didn't wear men's clothes or pretend to be a man, no one would associate her with security guard Li Ming. Not to mention the fact that one was male and one was female, even in terms of appearance, at first glance, the difference was quite large, because when Lumian played the role of Li Ming,

he used the Lie earring to lower his attractiveness and modify details.
Seeing this, Jenna, on behalf of the still somewhat muddled Franca, went through in her mind the potential problems that might arise when Lumina and Luo Shan meet. She then chatted with Anthony via WeChat about Luo Shan knowing the truth of the world, and consulted on the direction and strategies for psychological guidance.
Soon after, Luo Shan arrived on the 23rd floor and rang the doorbell.
At the same time, Jenna received a reply message from An Ruide: "Talk to her about her past."
Using a certain, experienced, and personally realistic past to reduce the current sense of disillusionment? Jenna roughly understood Anthony's intention.
She immediately followed Franca's instructions and found two decks of playing cards.
The four of them gathered around the coffee table and started playing Shengji, with Lumina and Jenna as partners, and Franca and Luo Shan on the same team.
They weren't gambling for money—Jenna, Franca, and Lumina had no spare cash to gamble. Instead, they bet that whichever pair of partners first upgraded to A could stick five small paper notes on the losers' faces or draw funny patterns with washable paint.
After successfully upgrading to "3", Jenna looked at Luo Shan and casually started chatting, "You mentioned before that your father was a police officer?"
"Yes," Luo Shan's mood had been low all along. As she pushed her cards towards the center of the coffee table, she said, "He was... severely injured while pursuing a cult leader with lots of blood on his heads, and died in the hospital."
"Was he honored as a martyr?" Franca asked.
"Yes." Luo Shan suddenly gave a self-deprecating smile, "When I graduated from university, I actually had the opportunity to work as a civilian employee at the police department, but I also received an offer from the administrative department of the Intis Group. I hesitated for a long time, feeling that I was just an ordinary person who didn't like exercise, so I wasn't suitable to be a police officer. Hence, I finally chose the Intis Group."
Perhaps that's not the only reason? Franca didn't pursue the question.
She simply felt that ordinary people without much ambition couldn't refuse a position in a public department, and it was just a civilian role, not requiring the arrest of criminals.

While waiting for the cards to be dealt, Luo Shan made a sound of agreement.
"This was actually my mother's wish too. Seeing police officers would remind her of my father's death."
"Your mother is in your hometown, not living with you?" Jenna asked, already knowing the answer.
Luo Shan looked at the cards in front of her, her voice gradually becoming distant.
"When I was in university, she fell ill and was hospitalized... It was on and off, she struggled for two years but still didn't make it..."
Before Franca and Jenna could comfort Luo Shan, Lumina suddenly spoke, "My mother was also seriously ill once, frequently going to the hospital. I was still young then, standing at the hospital entrance, watching her being pushed in, my father bent over, accompanying her by her side... I don't remember who was watching me then, I only remember that I was very quiet, didn't cry or make a fuss...
"I was luckier than you, my mother was cured later."
At this point, Lumina's eyes suddenly became misty, her voice suddenly deepening, "I miss her so much..."
Franca and Jenna suddenly exchanged a glance, both looking a bit surprised.
This wasn't part of Li Ming's background information, nor was it content they had instilled.
Could it be... Franca quickly had a guess.
"I miss my mother too," Luo Shan responded to Lumina.
She seemed to recall her past life, remembering the days when she and her mother depended on each other. Although her emotions were sad, that lifeless feeling had faded considerably.
In the time that followed, Luo Shan's state improved somewhat—while playing cards, Jenna and Franca chatted with her about university life and career experiences, and Luo Shan recounted those events that were deeply etched in her memory.
Franca and Jenna could clearly hear that towards the end, Luo Shan's whole person became excited, as if trying to prove something.
"Let's end this; it's almost noon, I'll go make lunch for you all," Jenna stood up, smiling as she spoke.
Today's losers were Franca and Luo Shan, their faces covered with paper notes written with various funny phrases, and they suffered the indignity of having photos taken as a memento.
"I object! You're trying to kill me by taking advantage of my illness." Franca was, after all, still in a state of illness, her mind not so sharp, and she had done a good job of dragging Luo Shan down in

the card game. She grumbled, "I'm bullied when I'm sick and weak!"
Jenna was amused by her.
"Wait until you're better and try again, you used to often lose to me before."
This referred to her Showy Diva days, often being dragged to play cards by the market district's boss "Red Boots" Franca.
Wasn't I just letting you win? Otherwise, how hard would it be for the mighty Witch to use a bit of mystical power to cheat and win easily? Franca grumbled inwardly.
At this moment, Lumina also stood up and said to Jenna, "I'll help you cut the vegetables."
"I'll help too." Luo Shan raised her hand. "The patient is responsible for resting!"
She took the opportunity to peel off the paper notes on her face and walked briskly into the kitchen.
Watching the three of them busy in the kitchen, with occasional laughter and cheerful voices, Franca leaned back against the sofa, peeling off the paper notes on her face, and spontaneously thought, If only this wasn't a dream...
After happily enjoying lunch, washing the dishes, and scrubbing the pots, Luo Shan said goodbye.
She had plans with a university friend in the afternoon.
Jenna and Franca, who was still a bit unsteady on her feet, saw her to the door.
Luo Shan turned sideways, her mouth open as if wanting to say something, but in the end, she just turned her gaze away and waved. "Bye bye."
She quickened her pace and walked straight towards the elevator.
Franca and Jenna watched her enter the elevator before turning back inside, each picking up their own phone.
Seeing their behavior, Lumina finally remembered that she had lost an important item.
"Where's my phone?"
It seemed to have disappeared last night...
"I have it," Franca took out Lumian's phone from her Traveler's Bag.
Before this operation, they had made contingency plans for different developments. Except for Franca, everyone was prepared to be kicked out of the dream, so they simply didn't bring their phones, or gave them to Franca for safekeeping, or left them at home. This way, when kicked out of the dream, they basically wouldn't be found by the Celestial Worthy through their phone contacts, and they wouldn't need to delete their contact list again —it would be too troublesome to add them back later.

Lumina took the phone and unlocked the screen with her fingerprint.
"'Intis Group Grimm' sent me a message... Why is the director sending me a message?" Lumina looked confused.
Franca leaned over and saw that Grimm had sent a 👌 emoji: "As expected of you!"
Obviously, Grimm had recognized that the woman who walked out of the screen with Zaratulstra was Lumina, and believed that Zaratulstra's death was done by the Child of God.
Jenna's thoughts raced, searching for an explanation for the relationship between Grimm and Lumina that didn't involve the supernatural.
She carefully fabricated, "Grimm has seen you in women's clothes and has become deeply infatuated with you. He's a masochist who sees you as his master. The more arrogant and cold you are to him, the more satisfied he is. Anyway, just ignore him and let him indulge in his own fantasies."
"Eww... pervert," Lumina looked disgusted.
Then she asked, "What does he mean by 'as expected of me'?"
"Maybe he saw a video or photo of you appearing with Zaratulstra and thinks you killed Zaratulstra," Jenna felt a fatigue from her brain working overtime. "Don't worry, he won't betray you. Instead, he'll keep this secret even more tightly and feel self-satisfied about it."
"..." Franca was left speechless listening to this, feeling that Jenna had been somewhat corrupted by the Internet lately.
"I see." Lumina breathed a sigh of relief.
The three of them each occupied a position, quietly being on their phones while digesting the food they had eaten at lunch.
Suddenly, Franca came across a local news item: "Crimson Moon Hospital's affiliated restaurant launched several mushroom set meals yesterday, which were well-received."
Devil's set meal—no, mushroom set meal? Franca's eyelid twitched, having heard about Li Keji from Lumian and seen the latest episode of "The Great Adventurer".
She remembered that not long ago, Lumian had gone to instigate Li Keji to create a new type of mushroom that could cure the vegetative patient An Xiaotian.

Chapter 987: Calamity

What has Li Keji done again? Franca took a light breath.

She reflexively wanted to check and confirm, hoping to prevent more dangerous things from happening in time, but as soon as she moved her body, she remembered she was still sick and didn't have the ability.

Jenna can't go either; she still has to watch Lumina and not let her run around... Anthony has another task... We certainly can't let Lumina go, the outcome would either be Lumina covered in mushrooms all over her body, or Li Keji getting pregnant... After thinking it through, Franca decided to wait a bit, wait until Lumian returned to the dream city, and go himself.

Li Keji is an ally, no need to worry too much... Li Keji is an ally, no need to worry too much... Franca kept repeating these words to herself.

She planned to forward this news to Lumian, so he would know what happened as soon as he returned to the dream city.

Just as Franca was about to select the option, she suddenly froze.

Shit, I almost slipped up...

Isn't the current Lumian actually Lumina?

Being sick really messes with your head...

Good thing I realized in time...

...

Inside the Tianyue Hotel, in the room next to Zaratulstra's.

The two bodyguards who had originally been following Zaratulstra appeared here, with an elderly man with white hair but a youthful face standing in front of them.

This elderly man wore white training clothes and had his hands behind his back. He paced back and forth near the wall and said, "Still no clues about the killer?"

"No, we can only be certain that a Demoness was definitely involved," one of the bodyguards answered.

The elderly man in white training clothes pondered for a moment and said, "Zhou Mingrui couldn't have appeared at the Shujin Hot Pot Restaurant for no reason; such a coincidence is unlikely.

"Investigate who invited him there, or rather, who induced him to invite people to eat there.

"Luo Shan and Luo Fu, who ate hot pot with him, are key subjects for investigation."

"Yes, Mr. Cui," the two bodyguards responded in unison.

The elderly man referred to as "Mr. Cui" considered for a few seconds and then said, "Be careful when investigating Luo Shan. Previous feedback indicates that Luo Shan belongs to an

otherworldly evil god and is a potential collaborator with considerable strength."
The two bodyguards acknowledged and left the room.
After pacing for quite a while, Mr. Cui brought his own bodyguard and silently opened the door to leave.
He deliberately didn't tell the two previous bodyguards that he would also investigate Luo Shan, that he would secretly follow them. If they stepped into a trap or encountered an accident, he would be able to glimpse the truth, catching any adversaries by surprise.
Out of the room, Mr. Cui walked unhurriedly along the thickly carpeted corridor towards the elevator area.
In one of the ventilation openings on the ceiling of the corridor, a pair of eyes was quietly observing him.
Those eyes were deep brown, completely blending into the darkness.
They belonged to Zhou Mingrui.
Zhou Mingrui had somehow sneaked into the ceiling of the corridor at an unknown time, observing every move of Zaratulstra's bodyguards and followers, and observing Mr. Cui's situation.
This was because, when he got up this morning and opened the door to get some good breakfast, he found a letter stuffed in the door crack, with a printed paper pasted on the envelope surface that read "For Zhou Mingrui".
At that time, Zhou Mingrui perplexedly opened this letter and found a photo inside, a secretly taken photo of "Mr. Cui".
On the back of the photo was also paper and text: "This is Zaratulstra's assistant. He will inherit Zaratulstra's will and do some things targeting you."
After reading the content on the back of the photo, Zhou Mingrui's spirit immediately tensed.
He believed this was a reminder from the group that shot Zaratulstra last night. He even suspected that Luo Shan inviting him to eat at the Shujin Hot Pot Restaurant was to let him witness Zaratulstra's death.
What exactly does Zaratulstra's group want to do to me? And what does the group that killed him want to do? Zhou Mingrui couldn't figure out the answer and finally decided to come and secretly observe the target person to see if he could discover any clues.
He thus confirmed that Mr. Cui, who lived next door to Zaratulstra and had no apparent connection to Zaratulstra's negotiation team on the surface, was indeed part of Zaratulstra's group.
He is indeed suspicious, Zhou Mingrui nodded slightly in the

darkness within the ceiling.
At the same time, he also noticed some other oddities.
He originally thought he would be inexperienced and clumsy at crawling through ventilation ducts, climbing ceilings, and secretly monitoring, making many mistakes, but in actual operation, he had a strange sense of familiarity and very smoothly accomplished his intended purpose.
This relied on more than just the power of an Assassin.
Yesterday too, when I saw Zaratulstra being shot, I wasn't nervous at all, nor panicked, very calm... Is this the psychological quality of a qualified Assassin, or is there another reason? Zhou Mingrui fell into deep thought.
He vaguely suspected that it wasn't just this world that he didn't understand enough, but also himself.
Mr. Cui, accompanied by his bodyguard, took the elevator to the first floor.
Just as he had taken a few steps towards the revolving door, he suddenly raised both hands to cover his neck.
He felt the rapid arrival of marionettization, and also felt the rejection of the dream.
His breathing became difficult, as if his whole being had been thrown into a void without any objects.
How could this be? Mr. Cui's pupils dilated, not daring to force himself to stay, and voluntarily exited the dream.
Thud!
His bodyguard suddenly collapsed and died on the spot.
A small insect flying nearby also fell to the ground with a splat, motionless.
In the temporary parking lot at the entrance of the Tianyue Hotel, Anthony, sitting in the driver's seat with Ludwig, calmly watched this scene.
The other Seer pathway demigod mentioned by the magic mirror Arrodes had also been kicked out of the dream!
And once the other party lost control of their marionette, the latter was essentially dead.
Lumian and the others, with information provided by the magic mirror Arrodes, hadn't ignored the Seer pathway demigod living next door to Zaratulstra who had helped Zaratulstra discover intruders before. But they all understood that before dealing with Zaratulstra, it wasn't appropriate to act against Mr. Cui, as that would alert them. So, they only secretly photographed Mr. Cui, and after the hot pot restaurant operation was over, Anthony, the only one who could still do things normally, stuffed the pre-prepared envelope into the door crack of Zhou Mingrui's home early the next

morning.
With Lumian kicked out of the dream, Franca seriously ill, and Jenna needing to look after two people, Anthony obviously couldn't deal with Mr. Cui on his own, so he could only "get" Zhou Mingrui's help.
Anthony watched the hotel staff hurriedly coming to check on the collapsed bodyguard and the bewildered Mr. Cui, not getting out of the car, taking the opportunity to eliminate the latter's dream manifestation.
It wasn't that he didn't want to, but after his observation, he found that there were police personnel discreetly deployed near Mr. Cui. If he were to act, even with Psychological Invisibility, he wouldn't be able to escape.
That would mean he was confronting the main consciousness of the dream, and the consequences could be more severe than being kicked out of the dream!
Anthony waited patiently, never finding an opportunity, so he decided to act after Lumian returned to the dream city.
When it came to covert killing, Lumian was more skilled than him, Jenna, and Franca!
Anthony chose to go back to rest last night and stuff another letter the next day, rather than going directly, in order to create a time difference.
Under the premise that the corresponding dream manifestation hasn't been killed, the time interval for those kicked out of the dream to return was about the same. If Anthony had reminded Zhou Mingrui last night, then Mr. Cui's return to the dream city and regaining control of his dream manifestation wouldn't be much later than Lumian's, at most a few hours later, and in those few hours, Lumian might not find an opportunity to make his dream manifestation die unknowingly.
Now, after Lumian returned around seven or eight in the evening, he would have nearly a day to plot the murder of Mr. Cui's dream manifestation.
...
In Room 2303 of Dechuang Garden.
Just past 7 pm in the evening, Franca and Jenna, who had been watching Lumina constantly, saw this beautiful woman suddenly change her appearance, becoming male.
Lumian immediately took the Lie earring, changing his facial features in a direction not too similar to Li Ming.
Franca took the opportunity to tell him about the mushroom set meals at Crimson Moon Hospital.
Lumian nodded. "I'll go deal with the other matter first."

As he said this, he stood up.
Franca held back her laughter and pointed at him. "Change your clothes first, don't walk away wearing Jenna's nightgown."
Lumian looked down and discovered that Lumina had been wearing Jenna's nightgown all along.
At 10 pm, in a white car parked by the roadside, Lumian was on his phone as if bored, seemingly waiting for someone.
They had rented a new car, because the previous car was registered under the name "Luo Fu", and if a car rented by Luo Fu happened to appear near the scene of Mr. Cui's death, the suspicion on Franca would be strong enough for an immediate arrest.
Lumian waited for a while, and through the rearview mirror, he saw Mr. Cui walking alone, preparing to cross the intersection to return to the Tianyue Hotel.
As Mr. Cui passed by his vehicle, Lumian's eyes suddenly took on a silver-white color with black.
Eye of Calamity!
Before Mr. Cui had passed the rearview mirror, he had already found the fate branch leading to the other's doom.
In the next second, Lumian hid his left hand wearing the Circle of Binding and slightly raised his right palm.
He touched Mr. Cui's main fate trunk from afar and violently pushed it towards the branch that appeared black.
His spirituality poured out frantically, his expression unchanged, his movements as usual.
Mr. Cui's dream manifestation was completely unaware of this, and the police monitoring him from hidden spots didn't notice anything unusual.
Mr. Cui continued walking for about fifteen to twenty meters, stepping onto the pedestrian crossing.
By now it was truly night, and there weren't many people on this road, nor many cars.
Suddenly, a car driving from afar seemed to lose control due to excessive speed, directly running the red light.
Mr. Cui saw this scene, his pupils suddenly dilating.
Bang!
He was hit and sent flying, his head heavily hitting the ground.
Then, he was run over by the out-of-control car, dying as thoroughly as possible.

Chapter 988: Father and Daughter

As soon as Lumian heard the sound of the out-of-control vehicle crashing into the curb, he immediately rolled down the window and poked his head out.

He looked towards the intersection about 15-20 meters away, and at Mr. Cui who had been hit and thrown even further, tragically run over.

Almost simultaneously, he saw several figures emerge from different hiding spots, rushing towards the deceased and the vehicle responsible for the accident.

Lumian promptly took out his phone, snapped a couple of photos, and muttered, "Holy shit, there's been a car accident!

"That driver was speeding like he was in a race, was he drunk?"

He acted like a bystander ready to post on social media and short video accounts.

At this moment, the dented vehicle responsible for the accident completely stalled, unable to start. The car door opened, and a man who could barely stand straight stumbled out.

"Damn, he really is drunk. If you drink, don't drive!" Lumian started recording a video, cursing as he filmed.

Only after the ambulance took away Mr. Cui's body, and the police led away the driver responsible for the accident after cordoning off the area, leaving just the traffic police investigating the scene and the tow truck on standby, did Lumian sit back in his car, as if contemplating how to share what had just happened in various group chats.

Not long after, Anthony, also in disguise, came out of the 24-hour convenience store on the side carrying a large bag of items, opened the car door and got in.

Lumian started the car and drove away from the scene.

They hadn't brought Ludwig with them, having sent the little boy to Jenna's place—if a seven or eight-year-old boy appeared at both the scene where Zaratulstra was shot and where Mr. Cui had the car accident, it would be very suspicious, even if the boy looked different at first glance.

...

In Room 2303 of Dechuang Garden.

Lumian sat in the single armchair and said to Franca and Jenna, "I'll go to Li Keji after midnight."

Pausing momentarily, he added, "Did Lumina show any unusual behavior today?"

Jenna was silent for a couple of seconds, then recounted everything about Lumina's blank stares, her inner impulses, the

bad luck surrounding her, getting some fresh air on the rooftop, her words during the card game, and many other detailed behaviors, without hiding anything.
Lumian listened attentively without interrupting, his expression gradually softening.
After Jenna finished speaking, Franca opened her mouth, hesitated for a moment, and said, "If you get kicked out of the dream again, you'll face severe restrictions upon entering for the third time, just like Queen Mystic."
Lumian remained silent for a long while before saying, "I understand."
...
At the edge of a lake, inside a four-story villa.
Bernie Huang returned from outside and walked into the grand, opulent hall.
Every time her classmates came to visit, they would say, "Why is your house decorated like a palace? Don't you find it strange?"
Bernie could only spread her hands helplessly and say, "This is just my dad's preference."
"Where are my dad and the others?" Bernie asked the butler standing in the hall.
She usually lived at school, only choosing to come home on weekends if there wasn't a long holiday.
The butler respectfully answered, "Young Master Huang Xia is exercising in the underground basketball court, Young Master Huang Bo is assembling mini 4WD cars in the toy room, Madam has gone out to attend an art salon, and the Master is in the wine tasting room."
Bernie nodded, walked to the side of the hall, and took the elevator down to the basement.
There was a large wine cellar here, with a secure storage room, and a wine tasting room where you could see the rippling water of the indoor swimming pool.
Huang Tao was sitting on the sofa, holding a glass of pure malt liquor with ice cubes, leisurely savoring it.
"You're back?" He smiled when he saw Bernie come in.
"Why are you drinking again?" Bernie sat down opposite him.
Huang Tao smiled and said, "As I get older, I don't have many hobbies left."
Bernie didn't try to persuade him further, quietly watching as her father took another sip of the temptingly colored liquor and grabbed a few shelled pine nuts from the dish of dried fruits on the table, popping them into his mouth.
After finishing what was in his mouth, Huang Tao asked, "What

about your classmate? Didn't she come to visit?"
"Something happened to her biology teacher at the cram school, she's busy dealing with that and doesn't have time," Bernie said simply.
Huang Tao laughed. "You mentioned that before. Really, if he wants to do experiments, he should apply for a job at a proper lab. Why be a biology teacher?"
At this point, Huang Tao looked at Bernie and sighed. "Why don't you like staying at home? There's still some time before school starts, but you've already moved into the dorm."
This isn't my problem... Maybe in Mr. Fool's perception, I'm separate from you all, we rarely get together... Bernie dutifully explained, "I'm involved in a research project."
Huang Tao didn't pursue the matter further, he was just complaining a bit. He changed the subject. "How's that children's book company of yours doing?"
"It's going well," Bernie recalled. "The children's book market is the most profitable area in the physical book market. There's a real demand for repackaging and redesigning classic fairy tales, and we're also nurturing our own children's book authors and illustrators."
"In this area, China started too late and it's still not very mature. There's still a lack of good works. You have a lot of potential," Huang Tao praised his daughter. "At the same time, you need to pay attention to importing copyrights. You can't ignore those excellent foreign children's books and leave them to your competitors."
He seriously instructed his daughter, looking as if he wanted to make Dawn Children's Publishing Company bigger and stronger.
Bernie listened attentively, occasionally offering her own ideas. The father and daughter discussed very harmoniously.
At the end of the discussion, Huang Tao suddenly swirled his drink and said with a sigh, "Do you know what the greatest pain in life is?"
Bernie shook her head.
Huang Tao smiled self-deprecatingly.
"It's watching the people and things you cherish most, the life you yearn for most, being occupied by others, while you can only be locked in a dark and depressing prison."
Bernie looked at Huang Tao without responding.
Huang Tao didn't mind, he just continued to drink his liquor with dried fruits, pouring for himself for a while.
He gradually composed his expression and looked at Bernie. "If you discovered that you were just an illusory character in a dream, and

at this time, someone was trying to awaken the master of the dream, what would you do?"
Bernie was silent for a few seconds before saying, "It would depend on the specific situation."
Huang Tao smiled and said, "Then let's be more specific. You clearly know that if the master of the dream is awakened, you will completely disappear. Even if there's another dream, the corresponding person who appears will no longer be the current you. But the person you care about most supports awakening the master of the dream, is willing to take risks for it, even sacrifice themselves. What would you do?"
She looked at Huang Tao, remaining silent throughout.
Huang Tao calmly returned his daughter's gaze.
After a while, he finished the remaining alcohol and stood up, saying, "I'm going upstairs to deal with some matters."
Huang Tao walked out from between the sofa and tea table, passing by Bernie, heading towards the wine tasting room door.
"Dad."
Suddenly, Bernie called out to him.
Huang Tao turned around, a smile already appearing on his face.
"Is there anything else?" he asked.
Bernie also stood up, saying thoughtfully, "I've always been curious, if we don't talk about science, what's inside a mirror, and what's hidden in the depths of a mirror."
Huang Tao looked at Bernie for a few seconds and said, "It hides a great horror beyond your imagination."
After saying this, Huang Tao turned back, opened the wooden door, and walked out of the wine tasting room.
"Great horror..." Bernie stood still, ruminating over these words.
...
Late at night.
Lumian used Teleportation to arrive near Crimson Moon Hospital.
He didn't rush to enter, instead transforming into Lumina's appearance, disguising himself, and walking around Crimson Moon Hospital.
He saw that in the green belts around Crimson Moon Hospital, in the crevices of the walls of various buildings, mushrooms had sprung up like bamboo shoots after a spring rain, all kinds of mushrooms.
These mushrooms hadn't invaded the living space of other organisms, nor did they threaten the structural safety of the buildings. They were just growing quietly and peacefully.
With so many mushrooms, no wonder Crimson Moon Hospital launched a mushroom set meal... They all look edible... Who

wouldn't want to use free ingredients? After roughly confirming the situation in the outer area of Crimson Moon Hospital, Lumian hid in a concealed spot, entered a mirror, and made his way to the psychiatric ward.
He wasn't worried about being blocked or trapped by the dream city police in this mirror world, because Lumina didn't have a real identity and had no apparent connection to Li Keji on the surface. Unless high-ranking police officials like Yagates had received a revelation through prophecy or divination that staking out here would provide clues, it was unlikely they would send people here.
And with everyone being suppressed at Sequence 7, Lumian, as a Demoness of Despair, wasn't too afraid of divinations and prophecies pointing to his whereabouts.
After observing the entire ward for a while, Lumian jumped out of the mirror-like object, landing lightly.
He always held a hand mirror, using it to reflect light and create illusions to deceive the surveillance cameras.
Lumian then surveyed the dimly lit corridor lights and the iron doors sleeping in the dark environment. His spirituality didn't give any warnings.
Next, he took a breath, not smelling any blood or other strange odors.
Only then did he gently knock on the metal door of Li Keji's ward.
Knock. Knock. Knock. The knocking wasn't loud, quietly echoing in this area without reaching the nurses' station.
Li Keji's voice suddenly sounded, kept very low.
"Who?"
This time, no white and tender mushrooms came to the window to peek, nor did a large amount of white mycelium emerge from the door crack.
"It's me," the black-haired Lumian answered softly, "The person who asked for your help in treating a vegetative friend before."
"Oh, it's you..." Li Keji still didn't appear behind the iron-barred window of the door, seemingly shrinking in a corner of the bed.
"Has your research made any progress?" Lumian asked.
"I have some ideas, a bunch of failures, and a half-finished product. It still needs verification, I'm not sure what the final effect will be..." As he spoke, Li Keji's voice revealed a hint of confusion, "But some strange things have happened, I might not have time to advance the experiment you want recently."
"What things?" Lumian's spirit suddenly tensed.
What could make Li Keji put aside his mushroom experiments?
After a few seconds, Li Keji answered in a confused, self-musing tone, "I'm pregnant."

Pregnant? Hearing this word, Lumian's scalp instantly went numb.

Li Keji is pregnant?

Pull yourself together; you're a man!

How did he get pregnant? Who did it? When?

Relying on the endurance of an Ascetic, Lumian maintained relative calm on the surface. He asked in a deep voice, "Are you certain?"

"It's definitely pregnancy," Li Keji's voice came from somewhere far from the iron door. "I used to be a doctor, then became a biologist. Do you think I can't tell if it's a pregnancy?"

He really is pregnant... Lumian's whole body went numb.

Among all the Beyonder paths he currently knew of that could make a man pregnant, only those related to the Great Mother could do it!

Did Grimm and the others secretly come to Crimson Moon Hospital to impregnate Li Keji without telling me? That doesn't seem right. For such a big matter, they would have no reason not to report to the Child of God... Moreover, he said that currently in the dream city, only I, as the Child of God, possess godhood and can promote rapid fetal growth while impregnating Li Keji, and this would still require the support of the obstetrics and gynecology department of Mushu Hospital... Lumian's first reaction was to suspect Grimm and other bestowed of the Great Mother, but the information he had previously obtained was insufficient to support this reasoning.

He immediately thought of a possibility.

Zhou Mingrui had received a strong stimulus, causing some changes in the dream that he and others hadn't yet noticed, and the Great Mother could now bestow godhood on a few chosen ones. It's only been one day, and problems from the changes have already erupted. *Could it be this fast?*

Besides, Grimm believes I've already impregnated Li Keji, there's no need to do it again...

I've already impregnated Li Keji...

As his brain worked rapidly, Lumian suddenly had an incredible guess.

Could the child in Li Keji's belly be mine?

Amidst his shock, Lumian followed this train of thought.

Last week, I high-fived Li Keji in the psychiatric ward of Mushu Hospital. I used this to falsely claim that I had impregnated Li Keji to deceive Grimm, so he wouldn't suspect my identity as a Child of

God...
21:50
Could it be that this contact actually made Li Keji pregnant?
But I only have a bit of Omebella bloodline, and I don't possess any Sower-related abilities...
No, it's just that I don't have them in reality, the objective conditions are completely unsatisfied, but this is a dream...
As long as the dream subconscious believes it, even the most outrageous and absurd things can happen...
At that time, when I high-fived Li Keji, in Grimm's eyes I was the genuine Child of God Omebella, and I do indeed possess Omebella's bloodline. Did this make me roughly equivalent to the real Child of God Omebella in the dream subconscious's perception? And the Child of God Omebella does have the corresponding Beyonder powers to impregnate Li Keji...
Moreover, most importantly, the place where I high-fived Li Keji and said words like "he's already pregnant" was Mushu Hospital, a place where the Great Mother can exert great influence. It's possible that the dream subconscious, confused and misled by the environment there, equated me with the Child of God Omebella...
Yes, there's one more point!
Lumian's pupils suddenly dilated.
They had previously overlooked one thing, subconsciously equating the dream subconscious with Mr. Fool's subconscious.
But in reality, the dream subconscious should be a mixture of Mr. Fool's subconscious and the subconscious of The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings
In this situation, the characters created by the dream subconscious and the changes brought about wouldn't completely originate from Mr. Fool's cognition, nor would they always be beneficial to Lumian and others!
Based on this, the character images in the dream city, including Luo Shan, Ai Nana, Deng, and others, couldn't be simply defined as characters woven by Mr. Fool's subconscious based on his own cognition and the situation in the dream city. Here, Mr. Fool's subconscious needed to be replaced with the dream subconscious.
In other words, Deng, Ai Nana, Luo Shan before drinking the Shaman potion, and other various characters, some came from Mr. Fool's cognition, some from that Celestial Worthy's cognition, some were mainly based on Mr. Fool's cognition but have been secretly spiced up by the Celestial Worthy. They couldn't be thoughtlessly viewed and analyzed as one type.
The environment of Mushu Hospital, as well as Grimm's cognition and the fact that I truly have Omebella bloodline, made the dream

subconscious at that time become dominated by the Celestial Worthy, choosing to "believe" that I was the Child of God Omebella, so Li Keji quietly became pregnant after our high-five? Omebella's child is equivalent to a direct descendant of the Great Mother, so when it's born, Li Keji will be completely corrupted by the Great Mother? The more Lumian thought about it, the more horrified he felt.
He thought of an even more terrifying development.
If Mr. Fool was at an absolute disadvantage, and the Celestial Worthy became the ruler of the dream city, He could completely blur the line between truth and falsehood, making the identity of "Child of God Omebella" in the dream city fully activate on the real-world Lumian, becoming real.
At that time, the real Omebella would resurrect and return through Lumian's body.
I almost fell for it without realizing... A cold sweat broke out on Lumian's back.
He remembered a joke he had seen online recently, and couldn't help but laugh self-mockingly. "Pregnancy really can happen from holding hands..."
"What did you say?" Li Keji asked confusedly from inside the ward.
Startled and emotionally stirred, Lumian calmed down and asked calmly, "When did you become pregnant?"
He was still a little in denial.
Li Keji honestly said, "At first I thought it was because I used my own flesh and blood and spirituality to create new mushrooms, causing spores, mycelium, and such things to enter my body and implant in my abdomen. Yes, this was part of my new experiment after you suggested it.
"But after careful examination, the time of pregnancy was clearly earlier."
Lumian fell silent for a moment before responding, "Can I come in to confirm?"
"Sure," Li Keji didn't refuse.
Lumian took a step forward, his figure suddenly disappearing from the corridor and appearing in Li Keji's ward.
At first glance, he didn't see a single mushroom,
This surprised him.
Logically speaking, Li Keji's living space, under the bed, in the corners, behind the door, should have been full of various mushrooms.
But now, the room was as clean as someone else's home.
Lumian then looked at Li Keji sitting on the bed and found that his belly had indeed swollen slightly.

In the next second, his spiritual intuition as a Demoness of Despair allowed him to confirm that the child in Li Keji's belly was blood-related to him.
But it wasn't related to Lumian, nor to Lumina, but to Omebella!
It really is mine... Just as Lumian was about to speak, he suddenly felt many nearly invisible fine threads swaying around.
Mycelium? He instinctively looked up and finally saw a mushroom.
The mushroom was semi-transparent, attached to the chandelier position, with a large amount of mycelium hanging down. At first glance, it looked just like a common jellyfish.
"Is this the half-finished product you mentioned?" Lumian probed.
The scruffy Li Keji nodded. "Yes."
"Where are the failed products?" Lumian asked further.
Li Keji answered seriously, "They were all absorbed by it."
As he spoke, he waved his hand, and the jellyfish-like mushroom floated down, brushing against his palm.
For some reason, Lumian was reminded of the image of a young brown bear nuzzling its keeper.
"What about the mushrooms that were in the room before?" Lumian asked for confirmation.
"They were also absorbed by it," Li Keji's voice carried a hint of expectation.
Lumian was silent for a while before saying, "I can help you abort it."
"But, but he is indeed my child," Li Keji responded hesitantly.
He seemed to have gained some maternal instinct.
Lumian's lips twitched slightly as he initiated Instigation.
"No, he's not your child, he's the child of an evil god.
"Haven't you always wondered why you were arrested? It's because an evil god took a liking to you and had Her followers fabricate charges to lock you up in the psychiatric ward.
"Think about it, you're a man, how could you normally get pregnant?"
"Women can get pregnant, why can't men? Mushrooms can too!" Li Keji argued with Lumian.
Lumian didn't give up and continued, "But can you get pregnant without doing anything, unconsciously?"
"Right..." Li Keji finally felt something was amiss.
Lumian quietly exhaled and said, "This pregnancy is the result of the evil god entering your dreams."
Lumian felt that if he hadn't fully digested the Instigator potion, using Instigation to persuade Li Keji to abort would be enough to complete the act. Unfortunately, he didn't need to additionally

digest the Instigator potion.
As a member of the assassination operation against Zaratulstra, as the person who assassinated Mr. Cui, Lumian had already digested the Assassin potion. Currently, only the Witch needed to be acted upon. He decided that if Li Keji chose to abort later, he would try to make the process as mysteriously terrifying and flashy as possible, to expel the Great Mother's child in the identity of a Witch.
"If you don't abort the child in your belly, it will absorb your flesh and spirituality, growing rapidly in two to three weeks. When it's born, you will become a dried corpse, unable to do more mushroom experiments, unable to fulfill your dream," Lumian said in a low voice, describing the possible consequences.
Hearing that he wouldn't be able to do more mushroom experiments, Li Keji made a decision. "Alright, please help me."
Before Lumian could respond, he continued on his own, "If the evil god's child hybridizes with mushrooms, it might produce some special changes..."
Evil god's child... hybridize... Forget about your mushrooms... Lumian didn't want to be chased by a mushroom calling him mother in the future.
At this moment, Li Keji's eyes lit up.
"Wait until I've thought of a plan, then you can help me abort it. This will take one or two days."
Lumian didn't dare to force Li Keji; after all, in Mr. Fool's subconscious cognition, no matter how inconceivable things were, this biology teacher could create them through mushrooms. If he became an enemy and forced an abortion, perhaps something terrifying would happen.
"No problem," Lumian responded.
He secretly decided that when the time came, he would make the evil god's descendant in Li Keji's belly disappear without a trace, unable to hybridize with mushrooms.
Lumian then cautioned, "Don't tell anyone else about the evil god for now, otherwise catastrophe will befall us."
"I won't," Li Keji shook his head. "I haven't dared to talk to Ms. Jiajia or other colleagues about mushrooms recently; they seem to have become different people."
"Become different people?" Lumian's gaze suddenly froze.

Chapter 990: True Commonality

Lumian's initial feeling was that Li Keji had noticed the difference between Queen of Stars Cattleya and Huang Jiajia, but after careful consideration, he overturned this guess.

This was because Li Keji said his other colleagues also seemed to have become different people, and it was unlikely that they had all been occupied and used by external consciousnesses.

"Why do you feel this way?" he asked Li Keji.

Li Keji stroked his belly and said, "The previous ones ate the mushrooms I sent, but the current ones haven't!"

The current ones haven't? Does this mean they've been replaced? Lumian's thoughts raced as he carefully asked, "What about Bernie Huang? Have you seen her recently, and is she different from before?"

"I've seen her, but I don't know if there's been any change. She never ate the mushrooms I sent before," Li Keji answered honestly.

In other words, Li Keji can't distinguish the difference between external consciousnesses and dream manifestations, nor does he have the observational ability to do so. However, he can determine whether the person in front of him has eaten the mushrooms he created... Taken together, did he mean that Huang Jiajia and others at Star Tutoring Classes had eaten them before, leaving corresponding traces, but recently they hadn't? Had Huang Jiajia and the others been replaced? Lumian had already been surprised when he heard Li Keji say that Huang Jiajia and the others seemed to have become different people, but now he felt more confused and alert.

He was currently inclined to believe Li Keji's statement, thinking that the Mushroom King, who was confined to the psychiatric ward and hadn't yet given birth, had not been completely corrupted and wouldn't be experiencing hallucinations or have his personality twisted to enjoy lying. Moreover, in the dream city, based on Mr. Fool's subconscious cognition, Li Keji had a certain uniqueness and could indeed possibly discover anomalies.

Who replaced Huang Jiajia and the others? *Why replace them?* Lumian pondered these questions.

Suddenly, he thought of one person: Zaratulstra!

When Lumian first discovered that Zaratulstra had visited Star Tutoring Classes, his initial reaction was that this Angel wanted to do something to the dream manifestation of Ma'am Hermit. But later, as events unfolded with Li Keji being arrested and sent to the psychiatric ward, this led him to overturn his original suspicions and stop thinking in that direction.

Now, the new discovery made him reconsider his earliest guess.
Zaratulstra likes to exert force on both overt and covert lines simultaneously. On the surface, he was helping the Great Mother control Li Keji and eliminating the hidden dangers brought by mushrooms, while secretly taking advantage of opportunities like visits to target Huang Jiajia and other teachers at Star Tutoring Classes, replacing these dream manifestations? The benefit of doing this would be that the attention of covert saboteurs would be focused on Li Keji's matter, overlooking the key point that Star Tutoring Classes itself was also a target... Lumian only now realized that Zaratulstra's plan was far more extensive than what he and his team had previously analyzed.
Based on this, he believed that Zaratulstra should have chosen the Conspirer pathway rather than being a Seer.
His experience, knowledge, intellect, and style are truly worthy of a real Angel... Lumian inwardly sighed, continuing to question Li Keji, wanting to understand more details.
But apart from knowing whether those colleagues had eaten the mushrooms he gave them, Li Keji shook his head in ignorance to all other questions.
Finally, Lumian could only caution, "You must come up with a plan in these two days, otherwise the minions of the evil god will take action against you again, causing the child to be born in the near future."
This referred to his and Grimm's previous agreement to take action again in a week to help the fetus in Li Keji's body develop rapidly.
"Alright," Li Keji answered, touching his belly.
Lumian looked at him deeply, forming a new idea: After Grimm confirms that Li Keji is truly pregnant and helps the fetus gain growth "momentum" with the help of Mushu Hospital's obstetrics department, I'll secretly return and complete the abortion!
...
At Xinhong District, in the rented apartment.
Lumian's team gathered again to hear him talk about Li Keji's pregnancy and the suspected replacement of Huang Jiajia and others.
"If we assume the culprit is Zaratulstra or his accomplices, then we can't just look at Star Tutoring Classes for the replacements," Jenna expressed her thoughts. "Doesn't this remind you of anything?"
Franca had a sudden realization. "The death of the Oracle?"
"Yes," Lumian had already connected this incident with the replacement of Huang Jiajia and other Star Tutoring Classes members. "If Anderson hadn't interfered, if we hadn't discovered

the Oracle's body in time, he would have definitely been sent to the morgue in Mushu Hospital B1, gaining a 'rebirth'. After that, wouldn't it count as the 'reborn' him replacing the original him?"
"Did Huang Jiajia and the others experience something similar? Was Zaratulstra targeting not just Star Tutoring Classes, but also Dream Tutoring Classes?" The more Franca spoke, the more shocked she became. "On the surface, he was seeking opportunities to contact Zhou Mingrui through visits to Dream Tutoring Classes but secretly he was replacing the teachers at Dream Tutoring Classes? How damn insidious!"
21:51
"Did Huang Jiajia and the others experience something similar? Was Zaratulstra targeting not just Star Tutoring Classes, but also Dream Tutoring Classes?" The more Franca spoke, the more shocked she became. "On the surface, he was seeking opportunities to contact Zhou Mingrui through visits to Dream Tutoring Classes but secretly he was replacing the teachers at Dream Tutoring Classes? How damn insidious!"
At this point, Franca sincerely sighed.
"Who knows what else Zaratulstra has done in secret, it's probably not just this one thing... Fortunately, we chose to eliminate the hidden danger in advance, kicking Zaratulstra out of the dream and killing His dream manifestation. Otherwise, if His overt stratagem and covert scheme were to be launched simultaneously, both reaching the brink of success, the situation would be unimaginable!
"Perhaps the whole affair would have ended there, with our complete failure as the conclusion."
"Now without the leadership of Zaratulstra and Mr. Cui, their subordinates will find it difficult to consider the overall situation. We can take this opportunity to dismantle the bombs one by one and eliminate the hidden problems," Anthony agreed with Franca's sentiments.
Lumian nodded slightly and solemnly reminded, "This is both good news and bad news.
"I believe you can all see that a Seer is more suited to hiding in the shadows, directing the play, rather than directly stepping onto the stage and exposing themselves to the audience's view.
"Zaratulstra previously needed to advance overt matters to obtain money and resources, to openly contact Zhou Mingrui, so He couldn't hide His identity and stay in the shadows. The same goes for Mr. Cui. This gave us the opportunity to set traps and make good use of the dream rules.
"Once Zaratulstra and Mr. Cui obtain new identities and return,

they will surely hide behind the scenes, covertly advancing their own agendas. At that time, the roles of hunter and prey will be reversed. Even if we show just a slight flaw, we will immediately be discovered and face deadly assassination. Once attacked, the best outcome would be the person being kicked out of the dream, with the dream manifestation most likely destroyed."
"Yes, at that time the enemy will be in the dark and I'm in the light, with the danger level skyrocketing," Franca nodded in agreement.
Because of her close relationship with Luo Shan, once Zaratulstra returned and focused the investigation on why Zhou Mingrui went to Shujin Hot Pot Restaurant that day, she could easily be discovered. That's why she said "I'm in the light."
Lumian chuckled in response.
"Of course, this is also an opportunity. You continue working in the administrative department of Intis Group for now. When Zaratulstra returns, see if you can use this to set a trap for Him. If not, you can quickly resign, change your identity, and also hide in the shadows.
"At the same time, we need to make good use of this period before Zaratulstra's return."
As he spoke, Lumian picked up his phone and sent a WeChat message to "A name that leaves a deep impression on you": "How have you been lately? Are you enjoying classes?"
Soon, "A name that leaves a deep impression on you" replied: "Do you want to check what time it is now?
"If you have nothing better to do, I suggest you go out for a run."
Lumian calmly replied: "Do you still feel that the world is fake lately, that there are terrifying fake details in the people around you?"
After about ten seconds, Anderson Hood replied: "It's even more fake than before."
"Such as?" Lumian pressed.
Anderson Hood sent a [illegible] emoji:
"For example, Ai Nana, Iron Skin, Flowery Bow Tie, and other tutoring center teachers all seem more fake now, different from before."
As expected... Lumian confirmed his team's speculation.
He asked with a [illegible] emoji: "What about you, have you become more fake?"
Anderson Hood sent "a dog biting its own tail": "I might be next.
"But I recently saw news about a foreign guest being shot dead."
A good Hunter should know how to obtain information from public reports... Lumian put down his phone and said to Franca, Jenna,

and the others:
"Most of the teachers at Dream Tutoring Classes have also been replaced."
"What's the significance of this replacement? To make all dream manifestations dominated by the Celestial Worthy, thus gaining victory in the consciousness battle?" Franca raised a question.
Lumian didn't answer, instead using frost to create a white board and sticking notes on it.
Each note had the name of a dream manifestation currently suspected of being replaced, as well as their corresponding real-world person.
Lumian stood in front of the white board, studying it intently for a while before asking Franca, Jenna, and Anthony, "See anything in common?"
"They are or were all pirates?" Jenna tentatively answered.
Lumian shook his head.
"That's the surface commonality.
"There's another common point hidden beneath the surface."
Saying this, he turned to his companions and said, "These are all characters that have appeared in 'The Great Adventurer' series of novels.
"In other words, they are all participants and witnesses of Gehrman Sparrow's life!"
Hearing this conclusion, Franca suddenly thought of the movie "The Great Pirate 3", of Jia Yu who was poached by Zaratulstra for playing Gehrman Sparrow, and of An Xiaotian, the original actor for Gehrman Sparrow who was now in a vegetative state.
"Is the focus of the contest the identity of Gehrman Sparrow? This also fits the prophecy 'The awakening of The World spells The Fool's return'," Franca muttered to herself.
With a nod, Lumian replied, "It seems so for now, which is why these people related to Gehrman Sparrow have all been replaced.
"The Oracle's death was the beginning, not the end."

Chapter 991: Proactive Small Talk

After suspecting that Zaratulstra had replaced the teachers at Dream Tutoring Classes and Star Tutoring Classes to target the image of Gehrman Sparrow, who didn't actually exist in the dream city, Lumian and the others discussed this for quite a while, but still couldn't figure out the significance and purpose of doing so.

They decided to write a letter, which Franca and Jenna would take to Star Dream Provisions Store tomorrow to mail out, to see what opinions the Major Arcana card holders would give.

As they stood up, preparing to leave the rented apartment in Xinhong District, Franca remembered something and curiously looked at Lumian. "You said earlier that Li Keji's pregnancy was because Grimm's cognition, the Omebella bloodline in you, and the Celestial Worthy's subconscious taking dominance because of Mushu Hospital's environment, equating you with the Child of God Omebella in the dream, making your casual comment 'he's already pregnant' become reality. So, as the Child of God Omebella, can you now use the Beyonder powers of a Planter, Apothecary, and Heretic Spellmaster pathways?"

Franca's eyes gleamed, feeling this had a bit of a "I guess that went well" flavor to it.

Of course, this "I" referred to the dream subconscious.

As long as the dream subconscious believed it, anything could happen!

Lumian tried to see if he could use the abilities related to Vampire, Harvest Priest, and Heretic Spellmaster, but all attempts failed.

"It doesn't work." He shook his head.

Before Franca could respond, he added thoughtfully, "Maybe it's possible in Mushu Hospital."

As Franca nodded in agreement, Jenna reminded Lumian, "If that's really the case, frequent visits to Mushu Hospital might cause you to become more and more like Omebella, until you're completely equivalent."

Lumian pondered for a few seconds, then said gravely, "It's a possibility."

Franca immediately hissed. "How sinister is the Great Mother's style, always making people fall into traps unknowingly? Sometimes, being vigilant seems useless..."

At this point, Franca answered her own question, "Judging by the name, perhaps the Great Mother symbolizes the 'yin'—'darkness' in the term 'yin-yang'..."

...

The next day, which was Sunday, Lumian again brought Ludwig to

Dream Tutoring Classes.
While sending the child into the classroom, he discreetly observed the front desk, every teacher he encountered, and Anderson Hood with his Eye of Calamity.
Except for the latter, the mercury-colored river of fate corresponding to the others all showed a black color representing death at some point in the past. Some of these black patches had become blurred, while others were still relatively clear, flowing forward with the illusory river, getting further and further behind, becoming harder to see.
They are indeed reborn people... Lumian didn't engage in conversation with Anderson Hood, but stepped back and sat in his usual spot.
Just as he was about to contemplate how to handle this situation, he suddenly saw Zhou Mingrui, wearing a loose sky-blue T-shirt, walking towards him.
How dedicated, to still remember to come for Business English class after witnessing Zaratulstra being shot and observing Mr. Cui... Lumian mused, standing up to greet Zhou Mingrui.
As fellow employees of Intis Group who had met more than once, this was expected courtesy.
Seeing this, Zhou Mingrui returned the greeting.
Just when Lumian thought he would smoothly turn into the classroom, Zhou Mingrui stopped, right in front of him.
Zhou Mingrui looked around and asked, "Has Mr. Da resigned? I haven't seen him every time I've come recently.
"You know Mr. Da, right?"
"Yes, Da Nizi. I brought my child here to enroll after seeing the flier he handed out," Lumian answered simply.
He hadn't expected Zhou Mingrui to initiate casual conversation with him, and even ask about the Oracle Danitz.
Stimulated by the Zaratulstra incident, has Zhou Mingrui started to more actively explore the hidden anomalies around him, more boldly engaging with us problematic people, and thus discovered that Teacher Da from Dream Tutoring Classes hasn't appeared recently? This is good news! Hmm, there's also a downside, if he keeps investigating like this, who knows when my team and I might be kicked out of the dream without warning, just like Mr. Cui... Lumian's thoughts raced, forming a rough judgment.
Before Zhou Mingrui could ask further, he sighed and said, "Mr. Da didn't resign, he passed away."
"Ah?" Zhou Mingrui's gaze suddenly froze.
His shock and surprise showed on his face.
This was also the expected reaction of a normal person hearing

such news.
"When did this happen? What happened?" Zhou Mingrui didn't hide his astonishment.
Lumian glanced towards the front desk.
"I heard Ms. Ai say that he seemed to have encountered a psychopathic killer and was strangled to death.
"At first, Ms. Ai and Mr. Anderson thought he was just missing, and because they didn't have much confidence in Mr. Da's ability to survive alone, they quickly reported it to the police. Later, after searching, the police found Mr. Da in the underground morgue of Mushu Hospital, in the form of a corpse."
Lumian's words were all information that Ms. Ai Nana had previously mentioned and could be found online, so he wasn't worried about being kicked out of the dream again because of this—after re-entering the dream, he planned to behave for two or three days in front of Zhou Mingrui.
"Killed..." Zhou Mingrui's eyes flickered as he fell into deep thought.
"Yes, the body was discovered in the underground morgue of Mushu Hospital," Lumian deliberately emphasized.
He was trying to guide Zhou Mingrui to notice that there might be problems with Mushu Hospital through normal conversation.
"The killer deliberately sent Mr. Da's body to the underground morgue?" Zhou Mingrui expressed his confusion.
Lumian shook his head. "It might not have been the killer, it could have been a passerby who discovered the body and sent it there."
"How is that possible? A passerby who sees a body would call the police directly." Zhou Mingrui increasingly felt that there was something fishy about this matter.
"But why would the killer have to send Mr. Da's body to the underground morgue of Mushu Hospital? Did he think it wouldn't be discovered if hidden there? What made him think that..." Lumian was responsible for raising questions, emphasizing Mushu Hospital, but not providing answers.
For him now, providing answers was too dangerous.
Zhou Mingrui nodded thoughtfully, then pointed to the Business English classroom. "I'm going to class now."
"Alright," Lumian sat down accordingly.
He leaned against the classroom wall, his thoughts gradually spreading:
The secret replacement of teachers at Dream Tutoring Classes and Star Tutoring Classes is really difficult to resolve...
If this were in the real world, I would find an opportunity to blow up the underground part of Mushu Hospital, completely eliminating the hidden danger. But in the dream city, with the

underground part of Mushu Hospital being the psychological trauma of a great existence and an infiltration point for the power of other great existences, I'm afraid even the owner of Star Dream Provisions Store and Stianos wouldn't dare to venture there easily, even if they weren't restricted...
Using the Eye of Calamity to distinguish whether the target is a reborn person, should we kill all those who have been replaced, like Huang Jiajia, Ai Nana, and others, to eliminate them?
I'm confident I could cover up the traces and not be discovered if I kill one, but killing so many? Do they think the dream city's police department and Chief Yagates are dead? This would be openly challenging the dream's main consciousness, and I might be identified the next day...
Moreover, with Huang Jiajia and others being related to the identity of Gehrman Sparrow, if they all exit the stage of the dream city, it might bring about unfavorable changes, or cause the subsequent awakening plan to be doomed to failure from the start...
Report it? Without sufficient clues, it might end up like the previous report about Zaratulstra, with no response at all...
What clues could make the police investigate deeply and discover the abnormalities?
I hope the Major Arcana card holders can provide good ideas...
Hmm...
As Lumian's thoughts became more and more scattered, he caught sight of Zhou Mingrui coming out of the classroom with his phone, walking towards the restroom.
Lumian tilted his head, using his Hunter ears to eavesdrop on what Zhou Mingrui was saying from a distance.
He heard Zhou Mingrui ask in surprise, "Weren't you scheduled to come on Monday? Why has it been postponed to Wednesday?"
From the other end of the phone, a female voice faintly reached Lumian's ears.
"I thought about it, you have to work during the week and can't take me out, so I might as well just go directly to report in."
Zhou Mingrui was silent for a moment, then said, "I have annual leave."
"It's fine, you can take me out on the weekend." The female voice on the phone said cheerfully.
Zhou Mingrui sighed and said, "Alright then, what time is your train on Wednesday?"
Hearing this, Lumian roughly understood what was going on.
According to the information provided by the Major Arcana, Zhou Mingrui's sister Zhou Shasha had been admitted to a university in

Yangdu and was about to come here to study.
Zhou Shasha will arrive in Yangdu next Wednesday? As one of the dream manifestations closest to Zhou Mingrui, what changes will her arrival bring? Lumian raised his right hand to rub his temples, feeling that one wave of events was following another without pause.
...
Star Dream Provisions Store.
Franca and Jenna, who had taken a taxi, walked into the dimly lit interior of the shop.
The former politely asked the shop owner if they could mail a letter, while the latter lingered in the entrance area, both examining the antiques on the shelves and observing the situation outside.
After getting the shop owner's permission, Franca turned to the shelf and dropped the letter in her hand into the silver-inlaid black mailbox.
As her gaze swept across, she noticed that the Pride Armor that once belonged to her was standing quietly on the edge of the inner side of the right shelf.
The surface of this silver-white full-body armor was somehow stained with patches and spots of dark red blood. Just seeing it gave Franca a feeling of rapidly weakening, as if her serious illness had returned.
It's become even more sinister... Franca didn't dare ask the shop owner what had happened to the Pride Armor, and quickly averted her gaze, walking towards the door.
At this moment, Jenna raised her hand slightly, discreetly pointing to the diagonal opposite side of the street.
There, perched on the branch of a street tree, was a white pigeon.

Chapter 992: The Unknowing Questioner

Luo Shan sat in a café near the police station, monitoring Franca and Jenna's whereabouts using a white pigeon she had temporarily modified.

She had drawn her own mark on the pigeon, as well as a hidden miniature camera. By wearing sunglasses with a receiving device drawn on them, she could obtain the corresponding signal. At the same time, she could use the connection between a Painter and a painting to drive the corresponding mark, thereby directing the pigeon.

Of course, this had to be maintained within a certain distance.

After seeing Franca and Jenna come out of Star Dream Provisions Store, Luo Shan quickly had the white pigeon follow them.

As she followed, she found that the two targets were approaching the police station area, which was where she was.

Luo Shan's heart skipped a beat.

Fortunately, her anxiety didn't last too long. Franca and Jenna only came to this street and didn't actually walk to the café door.

Phew... Just as Luo Shan breathed a sigh of relief, she saw Franca and Jenna, who were already five or six steps away from the café, disappear into thin air simultaneously.

Wh— Luo Shan's pupils suddenly dilated.

The next second, two people sat down opposite her.

One was Luo Fu, the other was Jian Na.

Luo Shan's movements froze instantly, as if she had turned into a statue.

"Were you monitoring us?" Jenna asked in a friendly manner.

Franca put the two mirrors in her hand on the coffee table, creating a Mirror Maze.

"I-I wanted to see what you were really doing, if you were deceiving me, if you were bad people." Luo Shan's voice gradually rose.

It's still the aftereffects of the talk about the dreamscape... I wonder if the Mirror Maze can deceive a Reporter's ability to explore the truth? Probably not... *How to guard against this kind of prying in the future?* Communicate important things via phone and delete chat records afterwards using the Information Shredder? No, except for me, Lumian, Jenna, Anthony and Ludwig don't speak Chinese, phone communication is done through voice conversion, which can also be heard... The Bottle of Fiction probably can't isolate it either, unless it's the Realm of Mysteries... Can we only communicate in places far away from a Reporter in the future? Franca thought of many things in an instant.

Suddenly, she had a flash of inspiration and looked at Luo Shan.
"You can follow us openly if you want, you can watch from the side if you want to see, it's just that some things will be more dangerous, we may not even be able to protect ourselves well. Um, if we're going to face this kind of thing, we'll tell you in advance, and you can weigh whether you want to follow or not."
Luo Shan didn't expect Franca and others to be so honest, and was momentarily speechless.
Franca took the opportunity to say, "We're going to a place next to confirm whether certain people have become more fake. Do you want to go?"
Confirm if they've become more fake? Luo Shan suddenly felt a bit scared, but she didn't want to deceive herself forever and not uncover the answer.
After a moment's hesitation, she said, "I'll go."
Franca laughed. "It's good that you have the ability to explore the truth, you can intuitively help us confirm, without us having to devise dangerous plans."
She didn't know yet if Lumian's Eye of Calamity could discover the problems with Huang Jiajia, Ai Nana and others, so she planned to use a Reporter's ability.
This way, they might even discover the aspects in which the fake people were fake, and thus obtain key evidence that could be reported to the police.
Moreover, Jenna had previously told Franca that since Luo Shan already knew the current world was a dream and was in a state of unwillingness to believe, full of doubt but unable to completely deceive herself, they shouldn't delay, lest she did something stupid because of it, or her mental state became problematic and was exploited by that evil god of the Fantasy Association.
Jenna felt that, having already chosen to be honest and truthful, they should continue this style. On the one hand, stabilize Luo Shan's mental and emotional state through psychological treatment, and on the other hand, let Luo Shan face the truth step by step under their control, confirm the facts, and not let her imagine, try, or do things blindly, which could likely bring greater disaster.
In other words, when problems had already appeared and couldn't be avoided, it was better to place them under one's own control and release them with precautions, rather than letting the problems develop on their own.
So, for something that could have been done with the Mystery Prying Glasses, they chose to ask Luo Shan for "help".
...

Outside Star Tutoring Classes.
Franca and Jenna brought Luo Shan to a white car that was unlocked and unoccupied.
Anthony, who had received a WeChat message from Franca, was already on standby nearby, ready to treat Luo Shan if she had a mental breakdown.
"This is?" Luo Shan didn't expect there would be such a car waiting by the roadside for them to use.
"Our companion drove it over; to convenience our observations," Franca explained simply.
Luo Shan asked in understanding, "Lumina who played cards with us?"
That's how Franca and the others had introduced her.
"Sort of," Jenna had no intention of letting the Spectator onto the stage.
After a while, they saw Huang Jiajia walk out of Star Tutoring Classes.
"It's her," Franca quickly informed Luo Shan.
Luo Shan raised her right hand through the car window, pinching the sides of her eye sockets.
She then saw the target person overlapping with windows, street trees, and cars.
She also saw a large number of invisible threads floating out from the target's body, extending towards the sky.
These threads were tied to the target's joints and organs.
With the pulling of these invisible threads, the target made corresponding movements, walking towards the nearest bus stop.
It's just like a puppet on strings... Luo Shan's hair stood on end.
When she had explored the truth before, she hadn't seen similar situations with people around, or rather, similar situations weren't obvious enough to be noticed by her.
Taking advantage of the time she had, Luo Shan observed the passing pedestrians.
She saw that these pedestrians also had a large number of invisible thin threads floating towards the sky, but these threads were all very loose, without the tension of pulling the human body to make movements.
"..." Luo Shan's body suddenly tensed, then slumped, leaning sideways against the backrest of the car's rear seat.
She ended her exploration and said as if sleep-talking, "It's indeed more fake..."
"What are the specific details?" Jenna tried to alleviate the emotional impact on Luo Shan by discussing business.
Franca sent a message to Anthony: "Closely monitor the target's

state."
Luo Shan described in a floating voice the scene she had seen and the comparison between the target and normal people.
During this process, Anthony, who was in disguise, pretended to be a middle-aged man smoking by the roadside, drawing closer to Luo Shan, and quietly using Placate.
After Luo Shan finished speaking, she fell completely silent, not saying a word.
Jenna and Franca looked at her sympathetically, temporarily not starting a new topic.
They were waiting for Anthony's notification. Only when Anthony said it was okay would they speak, and only when Anthony said what aspects to talk about would they construct corresponding language.
"I want, I want to go to the North City Cemetery," Luo Shan finally spoke.
"Okay," Franca immediately agreed.
At the same time, she received a message from Anthony, who had turned his back and used voice input: "The target's emotional state has stabilized to some extent, but there are still remnants of negativity, pessimism, and despair.
"Don't talk about anything, any casual words in the current situation might stimulate the target. Only answer when she asks."
Franca forwarded these messages to Jenna, then started the car and drove onto the main road.
The car was silent again, with only the faint sound of the engine.
After the vehicle reached the North City overpass, Luo Shan, who seemed to have become a clay puppet, muttered to herself, "In realit—in that world outside, is there another me?"
"Yes," Jenna answered.
She strictly followed the Psychiatrist's instructions, only answering Luo Shan's questions without any expansion.
Luo Shan fell silent again.
Finally, the car arrived at North City Cemetery and stopped in the parking lot.
Luo Shan pressed the door handle, paused for a few seconds, and said, "I'll go in by myself, you don't need to follow."
"Okay," Jenna and Franca responded in unison.
Luo Shan opened the car door and put one foot out.
At this moment, she half-turned her body and asked with dark eyes, "Are you here to awaken Zhou Mingrui?"
"Yes." Jenna didn't hide it.
On this topic, she felt it necessary to say a few more words, so she added, "If Zhou Mingrui isn't awakened, everything will be

destroyed when the apocalypse comes, including this dream.
"And the apocalypse is only a few years away."
Luo Shan looked at the seat cover in front of her with empty eyes, as if wanting to confirm details, "Why did Zhou Mingrui need to sleep?"
"To fight against an evil force," Franca explained concisely.
This was consistent with the core of the story she had made up before.
Luo Shan maintained her previous posture and asked subconsciously, "Has that evil force been defeated, so Zhou Mingrui can be awakened?"
Wh— Hearing this question, both Franca and Jenna were shocked.
They looked at each other, unable to answer Luo Shan's question for a moment.
Yes, if the Celestial Worthy's consciousness has been defeated, Mr. Fool could wake up on his own. If He hadn't been defeated, how would forcibly awakening him be essentially different from the situation before he went to sleep?
Or does the act of "awakening" itself symbolize the defeat of the Celestial Worthy's consciousness?
Mr. Fool wakes up while the Celestial Worthy is still asleep, will there be a change in the balance of power, with the scales of victory tilting towards Mr. Fool?
If this guess is correct, that's fine, but if it's wrong, does it mean our direction isn't right?
The Major Arcana have always focused on "awakening", but should we actually weaken the Celestial Worthy first?
"We're currently still in the stage of confirming the situation, we're not sure if that evil force has been defeated yet," Franca answered truthfully.
Luo Shan bit her lip and didn't ask any more questions.
She got out of the car completely and walked into the cemetery's attached flower shop, buying two bunches of white chrysanthemums.
She walked slowly forward, her figure gradually disappearing among the tombstones.

Chapter 993: Important Person

At Xinhong District, in the rented apartment.

Franca recounted the results of Luo Shan's observations and the questions she raised, finally saying, "The more I think about it, the more I feel something is amiss. The Major Arcana clearly mentioned in their materials that Mr. Fool went to sleep to fight against the Celestial Worthy's consciousness, so why are they solely focused on awakening Mr. Fool instead of helping to weaken the Celestial Worthy? And we too, with sufficient background information, never considered this direction before. It's as if we've been bewitched, no, as if we've been hit with a spell of stupidity..."

At this point, Franca suddenly paused.

Everyone present instantly thought of one word: Fooled!

In the unspeakable silence, only Ludwig was completely unaffected, munching on his boiled corn.

After serious contemplation, Jenna said, "Perhaps the act of awakening Mr. Fool itself will weaken the Celestial Worthy and strengthen our advantage."

Lumian shook his head. "Even if this symbolism holds true, we shouldn't have completely overlooked the direction of weakening the Celestial Worthy to help Mr. Fool awaken."

"Does that mean this direction is correct? So the dream fooled everyone to prevent us from thinking in this direction." Franca suddenly became excited.

"Not necessarily," Anthony replied, "That Celestial Worthy is the being at the very top of the Swindler pathway. Initially fooling us to prevent us from considering the possibility of weakening Him might be to make us believe it's the only correct path after we've made some progress in our later explorations, causing us to rush headlong into it."

"The enemy's opposition indicates we're doing the right thing, but what if the enemy is deliberately opposing... Feigning weakness when actually strong..." Franca understood Anthony's meaning and said frustratedly, "How should we choose?"

"Why choose?" Lumian laughed, "Awakening Mr. Fool and weakening the Celestial Worthy are two things we can do simultaneously."

He stood up and began pacing in the small living room, speaking as he walked, "Let's re-analyze the possible goals Zaratulstra wanted to achieve with those actions:

"Contacting Zhou Mingrui was likely to find a way to make Zhou Mingrui drink the subsequent potion, become a Witch, thus creating a fixed, long-term Mirror Person, and to some extent

shake Zhou Mingrui's self-perception;
"The merger and restructuring negotiations with the Intis Group were to obtain more money and resources, and using the mirrored Roselle to erode and influence Huang Tao was likely for the same purpose;
"Eliminating and replacing the dream manifestations related to Gehrman Sparrow's life experiences might be to weaken The World, indirectly weakening Mr. Fool...
"These actions currently don't show any intent to awaken the Celestial Worthy, though accumulating money and resources could barely count..."
As Jenna, Franca, and Anthony nodded slightly, Lumian began to contradict himself, "No, creating a fixed Mirror Person for Zhou Mingrui could also be for the Celestial Worthy to gain more initiative through the Mirror Person, gradually gain the upper hand, and thus awaken. Eliminating the dream manifestations related to Gehrman Sparrow is to weaken Mr. Fool, but replacing them with his own people and taking away Jia Yu is to later confuse the real with the fake, making The World identity point to the Celestial Worthy instead of Mr. Fool? This is also a kind of awakening...
"However, these awakenings all come with weakening Mr. Fool, the two can't be separated."
Lumian's point was that both weakening the Celestial Worthy and awakening Mr. Fool need to be done, and sometimes they are actually different aspects of the same thing.
Franca concurred succinctly, "But how can we weaken the Celestial Worthy?"
The Major Arcana card holders didn't know about the Celestial Worthy's past situation, nor did they mention which character in the dream city was closely related to the Celestial Worthy. Franca couldn't find a target to weaken the Celestial Worthy, there was no starting point.
"Currently, only Peng Deng is suspected to be related to the Celestial Worthy, but it can't be confirmed yet," Anthony said."What can be confirmed is that Peng Deng definitely has a special status in the dream city," Lumian nodded slightly.
This conclusion was drawn from Anthony's encounter and Peng Deng's rental of the magic mirror Arrodes.
Lumian then said, "Actually, there is one place that can be confirmed to be closely related to the Celestial Worthy."
Seeing Franca and Jenna's thoughtful expressions, Lumian directly gave the answer.
"Mushu Hospital!

"Without a close relationship, without a prior cooperation intention, the Celestial Worthy wouldn't send the corpses of Gehrman Sparrow-related dream manifestations to the underground morgue of Mushu Hospital, letting them 'reborn' there, and that kind of 'rebirth' would also cause the corresponding manifestation to completely become the Celestial Worthy's sole puppet."
"The underground part of Mushu Hospital..." Franca said, unable to help but draw in a sharp breath.
That was where the psychological trauma of a great existence materialized, the key node for other great existences to infiltrate their power, the place where the Celestial Worthy created exclusive marionettes, a place that even Sequence 0 true gods dared not easily intrude!
Lumian chuckled in response. "I'll be contacting an important person from Mushu Hospital tonight to see if I can obtain any useful intelligence."
...
Late at night.
Luo Shan still chose to lie down on the bed, trying to enter deep sleep.
If the world doesn't explode, I won't take a holiday. Even if this is really a dream, before the dream shatters, I still have to go to work when I need to... Luo Shan murmured, half self-mockingly and half self-comfortingly.
Then, she closed her eyes, and after a long while, finally suppressed her troubled thoughts and emotions, falling asleep.
This time, after falling asleep, she didn't immediately enter her Shaman world to continue guarding the semi-transparent barrier, but became muddle-headed, just like when she slept before becoming a Beyonder.
She vaguely heard a voice echoing in her ears:
"Truth can become false, falsehood can become true. The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings...
"Truth can become false, falsehood can become true. The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings..."
...
At the edge of Crimson Moon Hospital, in a secluded corner growing many mushrooms.
Lumian, transformed into a Demoness of Despair and dressed in a blouse, patiently waited for a while. He saw Grimm suddenly appear not far ahead with a person, as if walking into the real area from another world.
"Respected Child of God, this is Lu Yong'an, the dean of obstetrics at

Mushu Hospital," Grimm introduced his companion, "She is also a child of the Mother."
Lu Yong'an appeared to be in her forties, with fair skin and a beautiful face, round like the full moon, looking gentle and motherly.
She was carrying a medical box and bowed slightly to Lumian, saying, "Praise the Mother, and praise you, Child of God."
The important person from Mushu Hospital that Lumian had previously said he wanted to meet was precisely this obstetrics dean, Lu Yong'an—Grimm was very true to his word. As soon as the one-week deadline was met, he sent a message to Lumian, reminding him that tonight he should go help Li Keji with reproduction, both mystically and scientifically.
Lumian hadn't rushed to abort the fetus in Li Keji's belly, precisely because he wanted to fool Grimm first, to avoid reaching the point of needing to put on an act to cover up. After this, he would have at least two to three weeks to perform the abortion.
Hearing Lu Yong'an's greeting, Lumian, with his long black hair, nodded slightly and said, "Let's go in and take care of business first."
He didn't rush to inquire about the internal affairs of Mushu Hospital from Lu Yong'an.
This had to be done slowly, with proper groundwork, thinking through which things the Child of God should already know and not need to ask about.
"Yes, Child of God," Grimm and Lu Yong'an responded in unison, their expressions turning serious.
Lumian walked towards them and grabbed their shoulders.
Then, he activated the black mark on his right shoulder, using Spirit World Traversal to appear directly in Li Keji's hospital room.
Li Keji, who had been touching his belly lost in thought, sat up straight, and the jellyfish-like mushroom on the ceiling sank down slightly.
Seeing Li Keji looking at him with slight surprise, Lumian winked his left eye at him, hinting that there was a reason for this and to play along for now.
Li Keji showed an expression of sudden realization. "You're here to help me?"
Hearing these words, Grimm couldn't help but turn his head to look at the Child of God's stunningly beautiful face:
When did she manage to deceive Li Keji?
Grimm and Lu Yong'an had both anticipated needing to use their abilities to control the target.
Lu Yong'an sat down beside Li Keji's bed with her medical box and

began a serious examination.
After nearly a minute, she turned her head and said, "The fetus is very healthy and developing well and quickly."
Grimm immediately gave a thumbs up to the Child of God, praising again, "As expected of you!"
Lumian was already numb to this, nodding slightly, focusing intently on watching Lu Yong'an take out a syringe, draw some kind of drug, and give Li Keji an injection in the belly.
Then, Lu Yong'an's maternal radiance became even more obvious as she began to virtually caress Li Keji's belly with both hands.
Lumian saw Li Keji's belly begin to swell and enlarge at a visible rate. In just a minute or two, it looked like a six-month pregnancy.
"I can feel her heartbeat." Li Keji touched his belly again.
Lu Yong'an put away her instruments and drugs, and smiled at Lumian.
"Child of God, come again in two weeks and we can enter the stage of imminent birth."
"Excellent." Lumian nodded insincerely.
I'll abort it shortly! The earlier it's aborted, the safer!
"We'll be leaving now." Lumian gave Li Keji another meaningful look.
Then, he teleported back to the previous secluded corner with Lu Yong'an, who had walked back, and Grimm, who was already by his side.
Lumian didn't give Grimm and Lu Yong'an a chance to say goodbye and leave. He looked at the latter, slightly raising his chin, and said, "How are things going inside Mushu Hospital?"
He planned to ask vaguely at first, in the tone of a Child of God wanting to get feedback from his subordinates, and then selectively delve deeper based on Lu Yong'an's response.
Lu Yong'an replied with a kindly manner mixed with obvious respect, "The underground area is almost finished being renovated, and above ground it's still just us few and those who frequently enter and exit the underground."
The underground is almost "renovated"? Those who frequently enter and exit the underground don't count as people? Lumian raised an eyebrow.

Chapter 994: Dean

Lumian thought of the Mushu Hospital orderly he had encountered before and the situations he had observed during his several visits to Mushu Hospital. He felt that those who frequently entered and exited the underground of Mushu Hospital might truly no longer be considered human.

More than this, what concerned him more was that the underground part of Mushu Hospital was nearly "renovated".

When that happens, what changes would occur?

What does this symbolize?

Amidst his swirling thoughts, Lumian wished he could go blow up the underground of Mushu Hospital right now and be done with it.

Unfortunately, leaving aside whether he had the ability to break into Mushu Hospital's underground and completely destroy it, just the fact that the above-ground part of Mushu Hospital was still relatively normal, with many patients and ordinary medical staff coming and going, prevented him from acting rashly.

There was no way to blow up the underground part without affecting the above-ground area!

That would turn into a full-blown terrorist attack, causing Lumian to be rejected by the dream's main consciousness to the greatest extent, likely preventing him from entering again afterward.

First think of a way to get Mushu Hospital to stop admitting patients for a few days and transfer away the inpatients? This would be very difficult... Lumian looked at Lu Yong'an and carefully asked, "Are there still corpses waiting for 'rebirth' in the underground morgue?"

"Not at the moment. No one has brought corpses needing 'rebirth' over these past couple of days," Lu Yong'an answered truthfully.

After Zaratulstra and Mr. Cui were kicked out of the dream, did the corresponding activities stop? This shows we're doing well... Theoretically, the Celestial Worthy should have more than just these few subordinates, and should have found a way or medium for subordinates to enter the dream city... Were the others kicked out before, like the Major Arcana and the former Lucky Coin holders? That's right, there's no reason why the Celestial Worthy would only recently have subordinates who could enter, no reason why in the past only the Celestial Worthy could kick people out and Mr. Fool couldn't... Lumian nodded slightly and changed his question.

"Who is the current dean of Mushu Hospital?"

He wasn't afraid of Lu Yong'an becoming suspicious because of this inquiry, as he had previously asked Xu Xinyang and secretly asked

Grimm, and even Grimm, a child of the Great Mother, didn't know.
"You don't know?" Lu Yong'an looked at Lumian's face in surprise.
She then turned to Grimm and asked, "You didn't tell the Child of God?"
Grimm shook his head. "I don't know either. No one ever told me."
Lu Yong'an was stunned for a moment, then showed an expression of understanding.
"It's normal that you don't know. But it doesn't matter. The previous dean has left, and not knowing who it is doesn't affect anything. The new dean will arrive in a few days."
"Who is the new dean?" Grimm asked on Lumian's behalf.
Lu Yong'an shook her head. "It's not clear yet. We'll know when they arrive. Maybe it will be a surprise."
A surprise? For us, it's probably going to be a shock... Lumian made a sound of acknowledgment and said, "Have you been to the underground areas other than the morgue?"
He wasn't trying to pry specific information about Mushu Hospital's underground from Lu Yong'an, but rather intended to judge from her answer whether Beyonders blessed by the Great Mother could infrequently enter the non-morgue areas of the underground.
"I've been there, but can't go deep, can't go to B2." Lu Yong'an didn't think there was anything wrong with the Child of God asking this, after all, the underground part of Mushu Hospital didn't belong solely to the Great Mother, other great existences also exerted influence there.
Even children of the Great Mother can't go to B2? What's there? Lumian nodded thoughtfully and asked, "Are the Mother Tree's followers also doing something?"
As the Child of God of the Great Mother, he had to show a bit less respect for other existences.
"Yes, but I don't know what," Lu Yong'an took out her phone and said with a smile, "Child of God, shall we add each other on WeChat? If I discover any issues in other areas of the underground later, I'll tell you immediately."
She really knows how the world works... Lumian let Lu Yong'an scan his WeChat QR code.
Her WeChat name was just her real name.
Lumian didn't rush to look through Lu Yong'an's Moments. He casually said, "Have you found Zedus?"
Zedus was supposedly the true name of the Abscessed Hand, and the remnant consciousness in Omebella's remains had once shouted this name at Lumian.
Lumian was trying to probe whether the children of the Great

Mother had heard of Zedus.
"Not yet." Lu Yong'an lowered her head, "Mother is very disappointed."
Zedus really is closely related to the Great Mother... Lumian stopped there, not asking further.
Seeing this, Grimm respectfully asked, "Child of God, starting tomorrow you're on the night shift rotation. If you don't want to work it, I can find an excuse to switch you to the morning shift."
"Night shift is fine," Lumian chose not to switch.
This way, he could effectively increase his activity time during the day and evening.
Then, he glanced at the bright moon high in the sky and said to Grimm and Lu Yong'an, "Head back."
"Yes, Child of God!" Lu Yong'an and Grimm responded in unison.
Lumian didn't see them off, but teleported away first.
About a quarter of an hour later, his figure appeared again in this secluded corner, and Grimm and Lu Yong'an were already gone.
Only then did Lumian take out his phone and start looking through Lu Yong'an's Moments.
The Moments of this obstetrics dean of Mushu Hospital mostly shared obstetrics and gynecology knowledge, instances of receiving thank-you banners, achievements of Mushu Hospital, and updates about her own children. There was nothing that particularly caught Lumian's eye.
Because she had set it to only show the most recent month, Lumian could only return to the top of her Moments and look at her background settings and personal signature.
The background was set to a blurry silhouette holding a baby, and her personal signature was: "Be a guardian for women and children."
All very fitting for her identity and nature... Lumian put away his phone and teleported to Li Keji's hospital room.
Li Keji wasn't surprised by this beautiful woman's return. Looking at her, he hesitantly asked, "Do we really have to abort it?"
As the fetus grew, his maternal radiance seemed to have intensified.
Lumian chuckled. "You must have already felt the frenzied absorption of your flesh and spirit by the child of the evil god, right?"
"Yes." Li Keji nodded honestly.
Lumian continued, "And don't you want to see what innovative qualities might emerge from the crossbreeding of the evil god's offspring and the mushroom?"
He was now very adept at grasping Li Keji's obsessions and

weaknesses.
This was an Instigator.
Li Keji's eyes immediately lit up. "Alright, let's begin!"
Could you at least hesitate a bit to make me feel your maternal radiance is genuine? Lumian grumbled inwardly as he walked to Li Keji's bedside, extended his right palm, and said in a moderate tone, "It will be quite painful. Bear with it."
"Okay." Li Keji stretched out his arm, letting it hang in the air.
The fungal filaments hanging down from the jellyfish-like mushroom quickly floated over, wrapping around Li Keji's arm, their tips piercing into it.
"It has some anesthetic ability," Li Keji happily explained to Lumian.
Lumian didn't speak, letting his palm ignite with quiet and sinister black flames.
He then pressed his right palm against the surface of Li Keji's belly, and the Demoness's black flames immediately bored into it.
Li Keji's highly protruding belly suddenly began to writhe, as if something inside was struggling desperately.
Along with this struggle, Li Keji's face twisted slightly. Even with the anesthesia, he was experiencing unspeakable pain.
Meanwhile, the Demoness's black flames gradually dimmed and thinned. Even as Lumian continued to pour them in, they couldn't truly burn away the vile thing in Li Keji's belly.
Fortunately, Lumian had never thought from the beginning that the Demoness's black flames could achieve the goal, because one of his objectives was something that the Demoness's black flames, which only burned spirit and life, couldn't accomplish.
He used the Demoness's black flames first mainly to probe.
Suddenly, the quiet black flames in Lumian's palm became agitated, as if madness, violence, and destruction were being generated!
Flames of Destruction!
As the Flames of Destruction poured in, the clothes on Li Keji's belly abruptly burst into flames, as did his skin and flesh.
The fetus in his belly pushed upwards, as if trying to escape the burning of the Flames of Destruction, but currently unable to break free from the constraints of the mother's body, it ultimately collapsed back down.
Almost simultaneously, Lumian heard illusory sounds of weeping and screaming. He felt as if a vast green wilderness had appeared around him, where every flower and blade of grass first grew vigorously, full of life, and then was engulfed by sweeping black flames.

"Ah!"
Li Keji also screamed in agony, the pain of having his abdomen burned through was more than most people could endure.
However, Lumian had already used the Bottle of Fiction to seal off this hospital room, allowing only faint traces of Li Keji's voice to seep out.
This wasn't something worth paying attention to in the psychiatric ward.
Finally, the fetus in Li Keji's belly was burned to ashes, and these ashes, affected by the convection winds from the high temperature of the flames, swirled up into the air, flying towards the ceiling and scattering around.
"Completely eliminated." Lumian stepped back, preparing to take out a healing agent for Li Keji to drink.
Li Keji glanced at his charred abdomen and said with extreme disappointment, enduring the pain, "It's all burned away? There's nothing left?"
"I initially only wanted to burn its life and spirit, leaving the corpse, but as you saw, that didn't work," Lumian explained sincerely.
"Ah..." Li Keji waved his hand, directing the filaments of the jellyfish-like mushroom to move to his abdomen, absorbing the charred parts and promoting flesh regeneration.
Looks like I don't need to provide treatment... Lumian gave a deep look at the jellyfish-like mushroom that had descended.
After Li Keji's wound had healed and the pain had subsided, Lumian nodded slightly and said,
"Rest more these couple of days, then please speed up the pace of your research. My vegetative friend might not be able to wait too long."
"I can start again tomorrow!" Li Keji's enthusiasm for experimentation reignited.
"Thank you." Lumian politely left the room.
Returning to the rented apartment in Xinhong District, he lay down on the bed and fell into a deep sleep.
In his hazy state, he heard crying.
The crying voice was calling "Mommy" "Mommy", filled with intense pain, unwillingness, and resentment.

Chapter 995: Dream?

"Mommy..."
"Mommy..."
Lumian heard crying calls coming from the surrounding darkness, shrill and pitiful, as if clawing at his heart and soul.
Suddenly, black flames that suppressed madness and destruction ignited on Lumian's body.
These flames spread to the surroundings, burning away the darkness and everything hidden within it.
The crying calls abruptly became piercing, then quickly dissipated.
Lumian let out a cold laugh.
"If you had called me 'Daddy', I might have felt a bit reluctant and affectionate, but 'Mommy'? Who are you trying to fool?"
Just as he finished muttering this to himself, the surrounding darkness shattered inch by inch.
Lumian then awoke, opening his eyes to see the ceiling with its hanging chandelier, hidden in the deep night.
Was I just dreaming?
The fetus in Li Keji's belly died at the hands of its 'mother', its resentment unresolved, it latched onto me, and I thoroughly burned it away?
Your 'mother' is Omebella, what does that have to do with me, Lumian?
Lumian grumbled a few words, reached for his phone, selected "Intis Group Grimm", and used voice input to say: "I heard the cries of my child, who encountered a disaster leading to death.
"Someone must have helped Li Keji abort."
After sending this WeChat message, Lumian copied the content and sent it to Lu Yong'an as well.
Within ten to twenty seconds, Lu Yong'an replied: "Should we go to Crimson Moon Hospital now?"
Lumian brought the phone to his mouth, shook his head and said, "It's too late, the matter is already over.
"Rushing over now could very likely lead us into a trap set by the enemy.
"Since the matter can't be undone, let's wait until tomorrow, or the day after, until we're sure there's no ambush around Li Keji, then go investigate the situation, find the culprit, and think of ways to remedy this."
"Wise of you, Child of God." Lu Yong'an replied in a formal tone.
At this time, Grimm also responded, expressing the same meaning as Lu Yong'an. Lumian chose to copy and paste what he had said.
After reassuring Grimm, Lumian was about to go back to sleep

when he suddenly saw a new message from Lu Yong'an: "Child of God, I just saw someone standing outside the hospital from my window."
"Who?" Lumian understood that the reason Lu Yong'an mentioned this must be because she recognized the person, or they were very important.
After a few seconds, Lu Yong'an replied: "It's Zhou Mingrui."
Zhou Mingrui? Such a strong initiative, only learning about the Oracle's corpse appearing in Mushu Hospital's underground morgue during the day, and wanting to sneak in to investigate at night? Isn't this too rash? Or is it just a preliminary observation?
Lumian became fully alert, all traces of sleepiness gone.
He brought the phone to his mouth again and used voice input to say: "Don't worry about it for now, notify me when Zhou Mingrui enters the hospital."
...
Outside Mushu Hospital, Zhou Mingrui, still wearing a sky-blue T-shirt, pretended to make a phone call while casually surveying his surroundings, focusing on the emergency center.
After learning about Da Nizi's death and confirming the relevant details through public reports, Zhou Mingrui felt that Mushu Hospital seemed to have significant issues, especially the underground morgue.
So, when night fell deeper, he took a taxi here, planning to pretend to seek emergency treatment while actually taking a tour of Mushu Hospital to see if he could discover anything.
He hadn't planned to investigate the underground morgue today; he didn't want to take potentially significant risks before gathering sufficient information.
While saying words like "okay," "no problem," "alright," "can do," and "that's it," Zhou Mingrui's gaze swept across the emergency center, across the patients and family members coming and going, but he couldn't see anything unusual.
This wasn't actually his first time at Mushu Hospital. He had come for treatment twice before, as it was one of the closest hospitals to Intis Group and his residence. It had only been open for a few years, so whether for emergency or outpatient services, there weren't many people, no need to queue for long, and no worries about not being able to make appointments online.
The district-level hospital closer to his residence, he felt, wasn't very reliable, while the other well-established hospitals were always overcrowded.
The only difference from last time is that Mushu Hospital's reputation is growing, and more people are coming for

treatment... It's a good thing I recovered midway from having some health issues after listening to heavy metal and was thinking of coming here for treatment because there weren't many people... Zhou Mingrui recalled his experience of seeking emergency treatment half a year ago, as well as the incident a few weeks ago when he took sick leave to come to Mushu Hospital, but his illness got better before he even reached his destination.
Thinking of this, he suddenly had a realization.
That sick leave made me miss the formal meeting with Zaratulstra...
And I didn't actually enter Mushu Hospital...
My hearing that song 'Advance' wasn't a coincidence, the melody and sound of that song were mixed with mystical powers?
Does this mean that Zaratulstra and Mushu Hospital really have issues?
But when I came half a year ago, nothing happened, I didn't notice anything unusual...
Are the problems at Mushu Hospital gradually worsening?
As Zhou Mingrui muttered to himself, his gaze moved up from the emergency center to the entire building.
Suddenly, he heard his own heartbeat.
Thump!
Thump!
Zhou Mingrui inexplicably felt fear, making his heart feel as if it had been violently squeezed by an invisible hand, uncontrollably speeding up its beating.
Thump!
Thump!
He felt as if something he feared and dreaded most was hidden in that building, as if it were the source of his fear.
There really is a problem... Zhou Mingrui's pupils rapidly dilated.
Half a year ago, he had also come for emergency treatment at night, and had also looked at Mushu Hospital's main building, but at that time he didn't have any feeling that terrifying things were hiding inside.
Zhou Mingrui steadied himself, closed his eyes, and regulated his breathing.
When his heartbeat calmed down, he looked at the Mushu Hospital building again.
Thump!
Thump!
He once again experienced a sudden burst of fear, instinctively believing that deep inside Mushu Hospital were things he didn't want to face and was afraid to encounter.

Zhou Mingrui subconsciously wanted to turn and leave, but ultimately endured.
Just do a preliminary observation, just do a preliminary observation...
Avoiding won't solve the problem, avoiding won't solve the problem...
As he muttered to himself, Zhou Mingrui's right palm, not holding the phone, naturally hung down, clenching and unclenching, unclenching and clenching.
After about ten seconds, he hung up the phone, took a step forward, and walked towards the entrance of the emergency center.
...
In Room 2303 of Dechuang Garden.
After Franca and Jenna fell asleep, they quickly gained lucidity.
This was something that inevitably happened when Beyonders entered Luo Shan's Shaman world, and neither of them was surprised.
But in the next second, what met their eyes was not the frozen storm, wandering Astral Projections, and semi-transparent barriers, but a dimly lit corridor.
The walls of the corridor were painted white, giving off a slight green tinge under the dim light.
"Where is this?" Franca blurted out in astonishment.
Where has Luo Shan's Shaman world gone?
Amidst her surprise, Jenna thought of a possibility. "Could something have happened to Luo Shan? Because of confirming that Huang Jiajia and others were more fake?"
That would make Luo Shan further face the fact that this was a dream.
"But didn't Anthony say that Luo Shan's emotions had stabilized to some extent?
"Did she experience some shock after going home?" Franca responded with confusion.
"Anyway, let's find Luo Shan first. This might be the Shaman world after some change." Jenna looked around and concentrated on listening.
Faced with a situation different from usual, Franca instinctively put her hand into her Traveler's Bag, preparing to take out her Beyonder items.
Suddenly, she paused. "No, that's not right!"
Seeing Jenna turn her gaze towards her, Franca said with a serious expression,
"The Traveler's Bag is still here, and the items inside are still there."

Jenna's gaze instantly froze, understanding what Franca meant: Only Astral ProjectionS could enter Luo Shan's Shaman world to fight monsters, and Astral Projections obviously wouldn't carry a Traveler's Bag and corresponding items. Even if they did, it would only be something conjured by the dream, with no actual ability!
"This isn't Luo Shan's Shaman world? What exactly have we encountered?" Jenna furrowed her brow.
She tried to leave this place through Cogitation, to make her Astral Projection return to her body.
But this had no effect.
"We're not Astral Projections on an excursion, entering Luo Shan's dream or Shaman world. We've been directly transferred to this place," Franca gave her conclusion, "How is this possible? I didn't feel anything at all..."
Just as she finished speaking, she suddenly heard Luo Shan's voice coming from a room ahead.
"No, no, I refuse!"
A few seconds later, the door of that room was pulled open, and Luo Shan, wearing pajamas, rushed out.
Luo Shan saw Franca and Jenna, stopped in her tracks, and asked in surprise, "You're here too?"
Franca and Jenna first lowered their heads, examining their own clothes, finding that they were both wearing nightgowns, then Franca addressed Luo Shan, "Where is this? Why shouldn't we be here?"
"This is my dream... Did I dream about you?" Luo Shan looked bewildered and confused.
Franca and Jenna exchanged a glance, then carefully asked, "What did you dream about?"
"I dreamed that someone was whispering strange words in my ear, and I dreamed of many fragmented scenes. There was a pregnant woman with a big belly, it seemed like the flesh on her face and one eyeball had been clawed off, with head-like lumps growing on both sides of her shoulders. There was also a man whose heart had been dug out, and the cries of infants...
"Finally, I dreamed of this corridor, dreamed that I was in a room, and a voice told me..." Luo Shan suddenly stopped as she recalled her dream.
"Told you what?" Jenna pressed.
Luo Shan hesitated for a few seconds before saying, "It said, said it could help me masquerade as the genuine article, replace the me outside, so that even if the dream shatters, I could live on truly...
"I-I couldn't accept that, how could I, how could I harm an innocent person?"

Hearing Luo Shan's words, Franca and Jenna's pupils dilated simultaneously.
The former swallowed hard and asked, "Do you remember the strange words at the beginning of the dream?"
Luo Shan tried her best to recall. "It seemed, seemed to be 'Truth can become false, falsehood can become true. The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings...'"
At this moment, Jenna and Franca both seemed to turn into statues.
Franca suddenly "woke up" and said in a deep voice, "Quickly, let's confirm where this place is!"
"Isn't this my dream..." Luo Shan said softly.
"Are you usually this lucid in your dreams?" Jenna asked rhetorically while looking for identifiable signs.
"That's true..." As Luo Shan muttered in confusion, Franca and Jenna simultaneously discovered a bulletin board on the wall ahead.
The two strode forward, rushing over, and with the help of the dim light, they immediately saw large characters in a certain part of the bulletin board: "Mushu Hospital."

Chapter 996: Psychological Trauma

Mushu Hospital?

Franca and Jenna suddenly felt as if they had been struck by lightning, a tingling sensation rapidly shooting up from their tailbones to the backs of their heads.

How did they end up at Mushu Hospital?

Was this real or fake?

Franca didn't need to take out a mirror and use Magic Mirror Divination to get an answer. Her spiritual intuition had already told her that this was most likely the real Mushu Hospital!

Although she didn't understand how she and Jenna had been sleeping peacefully in Room 2303 of Dechuang Garden and then unknowingly arrived at Mushu Hospital, she chose to trust her spiritual intuition.

Jenna had a similar judgment. After exchanging a glance with Franca, she stood still, closed her eyes, and quickly entered a Cogitative state, imagining herself standing on the edge of a cliff.

In her imagination, she leaped off, jumping towards a bottomless abyss.

She fell faster and faster, but there was no shattering of darkness, no waking up startled from a dream.

Jenna opened her eyes and slowly shook her head at Franca.

Her meaning was clear: here, they couldn't exit the dream city and return to the real world!

Hiss... Would the above-ground floors of Mushu Hospital have similar restrictions? This might be in the underground area of Mushu Hospital... Franca instantly came up with a new speculation.

Her already highly tense mental state drew even closer to its limit.

"What's wrong?" Luo Shan still looked bewildered.

Hearing Luo Shan's question, Franca suddenly had a series of thoughts:

Just now, Luo Shan said this was her dream...

But this is the real Mushu Hospital, quite possibly the underground part of Mushu Hospital...

Did her dream connect to this place, transferring Beyonders within a certain range here?

Why could it connect, why could it transfer us?

Wait, according to our previous judgment, every character in the dream city is constructed by the dream subconscious based on its own cognition and social relationships. Luo Shan is the same, and the dream subconscious is a blend of Mr. Fool's subconscious and the Celestial Worthy's subconscious. In other words, Luo Shan is

equivalent to a part of the dream subconscious, equivalent to a division of Mr. Fool's subconscious.
She developed psychological trauma from the shock that the current world is a dream city, which is equivalent to a part of Mr. Fool's divided subconscious developing psychological trauma, while the underground area of Mushu Hospital is where Mr. Fool's psychological traumas converge and manifest...
This connects everything together. Hmm, the psychological traumas manifesting in the underground area of Mushu Hospital should not only be from Mr. Fool, but also include those of the Celestial Worthy. More accurately, they come from the dream subconscious, which is formed by blending Mr. Fool's and the Celestial Worthy's subconsciouses. My goodness, will we encounter the Celestial Worthy's psychological traumas later?
However, this also has a good side. If we know what the Celestial Worthy's psychological traumas are, and can escape alive, we could deduce ways to weaken the Celestial Worthy.
Hmm... Purely having mystical similarities and close mystical connections is not enough for Luo Shan to bring me and Jenna to appear out of thin air in the underground area of Mushu Hospital. There needs to be a force to push, to utilize...
At first, Luo Shan heard 'Truth can become false, falsehood can become true. The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings'... This indicates that she has actually been targeted by some faction, the problem has been identified, but that faction wanted to fish or wait for an opportunity before taking action?
Zaratulstra's group? No, if it were them, Zaratulstra would have absolutely guarded against the possibility of Zhou Mingrui being invited to eat at the hot pot restaurant...
As thoughts flashed through Franca's mind, she didn't dare waste time on deep thinking and analysis. She carefully chose her words and said to Luo Shan, "This might be the underground part of Mushu Hospital, and it's not something you dreamed up, it's real."
Without waiting for Luo Shan to ask further questions, Franca made up a reason based on her recent speculation. "There's likely an enemy hidden in or near your room who, while you were sleeping, exerted influence and used your Shaman world to transfer us here out of thin air."
Luo Shan blinked and said, "No wonder at first it was like my usual dreams, but then I became more and more lucid...
"Why bring us to the underground of Mushu Hospital? Is there a big problem here?"
As the two conversed, Jenna searched through her Traveler's Bag.
She originally wanted to make a phone call or send a WeChat

message to try to call for help or contact Lumian, but she and Franca had put their phones beside their pillows before sleeping, not holding them tightly or carrying them on their persons. Therefore, they were both currently "phoneless".
Jenna took out the Ice Mirror Charm with only one use left and held it in her palm—she had another Ice Mirror Charm that could be used four times, which Lumian had found an opportunity to remake for all team members after being kicked out of the dream the day before yesterday.
"I don't know, I'm only sure that it's very dangerous here, we need to leave as soon as possible," Franca replied to Luo Shan, looking back and forth. "Let's quickly find the elevator lobby and go up to the first floor by elevator or stairs."
Luo Shan's spirits also tensed up as she followed Franca's actions, surveying their surroundings.
At this moment, Jenna activated the Ice Mirror Charm to see if she could leave the current area through the mirror she carried.
But after being enveloped by the charm's light, she found that the world behind the mirror was deep and dark, giving her an extremely dangerous feeling.
She didn't dare to pass through the glass mirror surface and enter the mirror world.
"The mirror world is also abnormal," Jenna raised her head and said to Franca.
As she spoke, the Ice Mirror Charm in her hand turned into sparkling fragments, quickly scattering and disappearing.
"That's normal," Franca wasn't particularly surprised by this. "In a place like this, maybe we can only leave through normal means and predetermined exits. Let's go find the elevator lobby now."
Luo Shan first made a sound of agreement, then remembered her ability and asked with some expectation, "Do you have any paint and brushes? Pencils or pens would work too."
"You want to draw a door to get out?" Jenna understood.
"Yes." Luo Shan nodded heavily.
Franca frowned slightly and said, "Are you sure the door you draw will lead to the upper levels of Mushu Hospital or the entrance, and not to other areas of the underground part?"
"I can draw the door of my home, that way we can return home, but there's a distance limit. I'm not sure if the distance between Mushu Hospital and Dechuang Garden meets the conditions..." Luo Shan's voice gradually lowered.
Franca quickly made a decision.
"Let's first look for a real exit, first find the elevator lobby. If we can't find it, or if we're trapped, then we'll risk using your drawn

'door'."
Seeing Jenna nod in agreement, Luo Shan could only temporarily abandon the idea of drawing a door to exit.
After giving Luo Shan a fountain pen and a sharpened pencil, Franca turned around, partly relying on observing the environment and partly following her spiritual intuition, and walked towards the other end of the corridor.
Soon, the three saw a door, a double wooden door with glass.
Franca, walking in front, brought her face close to the glass on the door, trying to observe the situation behind it.
But beyond the glass was pitch black. Even with a Demoness's night vision, she couldn't clearly see what was hidden inside.
Franca felt as if her eyes were covered by a black cloth, rather than the corresponding environment losing light.
After performing a simple Magic Mirror Divination, Franca stretched out both hands and pushed open the large double wooden doors.
What lay ahead was not an extension of the corridor, but a dimly lit hall with similar double wooden doors at the far end.
What Franca, Jenna, and Luo Shan noticed first was not these, but the corpses hanging from the ceiling.
They were gently swaying.
As they swayed, some of the bodies half-turned, allowing Franca and the others to clearly see their appearances.
There was Ai Nana, the principal of Dream Tutoring Classes, Huang Jiajia, and other teachers from the Dream Tutoring Classes that Jenna had seen before.
"Mmph..." Luo Shan instinctively wanted to scream, but was quickly muffled by Jenna's hand.
"How is this possible?" Franca's scalp tingled.
She knew that the dream manifestations of Ai Nana and Huang Jiajia had essentially died and might have been hung up like the Oracle Da Nizi before, but she never imagined they would still be hanging, hanging together, densely packed like wind-dried cured meat.
"They're hanging here? Then who are the ones outside?
"Didn't their corpses gain 'new life' and run out?
"Lumian said their fates were also connected..."
Jenna had similar questions, and she thought of a possibility.
"Manifestation of psychological trauma?"
Yes, the underground area of Mushu Hospital is where the dream subconscious's psychological traumas manifest. The psychological trauma created by Ai Nana and Huang Jiajia being hung up and the "rebirth" of corpses running out could exist simultaneously and

occur in parallel... Franca accepted this explanation and had no intention of delving deeper into the truth right now.
She said to Jenna and Luo Shan, "Let's go through, to the door on the other side."
Luo Shan, encountering such a horrifying scene for the first time, was completely at a loss and could only choose to follow Franca and Jenna's lead, passing through where the hanging corpses were less dense.
Wind occasionally blew through the hall, causing the corpses to sway back and forth, sometimes swinging left and right, nearly brushing against Luo Shan's head several times.
Luo Shan used all her strength to keep herself from reacting excessively.
Finally, they "squeezed" through the hanging corpses and reached the double wooden doors representing the exit.
After going through the process and getting the same result as before, Franca once again stretched out both hands and pushed open the doors.
Ahead was a corridor, an extremely dimly lit corridor.
At the end of the corridor stood a blurry figure.
Franca and the others simultaneously raised their guard, carefully passing through the wooden doors and entering the corridor.
The scene before their eyes gradually became clear.
They could now clearly see that blurry figure: it was a giant mushroom, over two meters tall!
The top of the giant mushroom was blood-red, interspersed with white patterns. Its body was composed of countless similar small mushrooms, their patterns collectively depicting a handsome yet strange face. On each side, identical mushrooms extended out, forming slender arms.
Smack!
The double wooden doors behind Franca, Jenna, and Luo Shan closed.

Chapter 997: Different Regions

Seeing that bizarrely shaped giant mushroom person, even Franca, a veteran gamer, felt a sense of morbid curiosity and horror.

My goodness, what kind of monstrosity is this?

As expected of something evolved from a great existence's psychological trauma, who knows if it's from Mr. Fool or the Celestial Worthy...

As similar thoughts flashed through her mind, Franca and Jenna tacitly split to the sides, one hiding in the shadows, the other concealing her form.

Luo Shan had never cooperated with them in Beyonder combat before, and this was her first time encountering a monster without barriers separating them. Moreover, this wasn't the domain of her Shaman abilities, so she was momentarily at a loss.

She instinctively turned around, wanting to run back to the previous hall, moving so fast she left an afterimage in place.

However, although she chose the double doors behind her, she was shocked to find herself rapidly approaching the blood-red giant mushroom person with white patterns.

At the same time, Franca emerged from the shadows.

She felt the shadows she was hiding in strangely come alive, as if trying to control and erode her.

The next second, she and Luo Shan saw the giant mushroom person suddenly swell and grow larger, a giant lava sword burning with pale blue flames coalescing in its hand.

The giant mushroom person took a step closer, swinging down the great sword that seemed formed of red-hot lava.

Franca didn't dodge backward, but instead shot forward, lowering her body. Before the lava sword could strike, she darted past the scorching heat waves to the mushroom person's side.

Jenna's body quickly outlined against the ceiling position, holding a brass-colored revolver aimed at the giant mushroom's head.

Bang!

The giant mushroom person's sword strike hit the inexperienced Luo Shan, shattering this Painter like a mirror.

The Mirror Substitution that Jenna and Franca had previously made for Luo Shan finally came in handy.

The lava sword didn't stop after shattering Luo Shan, heavily striking the corridor floor and sending out pale blue sulfur fireballs.

Rumble!

Jenna had just pulled the trigger, firing a bright yellow bullet at the giant mushroom person's head, when she was engulfed by the

chain reaction of explosions.
Most of the corridor, including Franca and the giant mushroom person itself, was affected by the explosion created by over a dozen sulfur fireballs.
Franca and Jenna's Mirror Substitutions were passively triggered, their bodies first thinning, then developing cracks, and finally shattering into pieces.
When the explosive wind in the narrow environment subsided, the figures of Franca, Jenna, and Luo Shan outlined at the giant mushroom person's original position, at the end of this corridor, next to the other set of double doors.
They saw that half of the giant mushroom person's head had collapsed, oozing dark red blood, white mycelium, and tiny spores. They saw its body similarly torn open by the explosion, revealing large wounds filled with both mycelium and flesh.
As the flesh writhed and the mycelium grew, the giant mushroom person's wounds rapidly healed.
Seeing this, Franca's scalp tingled. She turned around, pushed open the door, and rushed out of this corridor.
She felt that fighting in this narrow environment wasn't advantageous for them, while the terrifying mushroom person with its exaggerated self-healing ability and explosive methods was clearly more in its element!
So, she had to escape from here, firstly to try to shake off the giant mushroom person, and secondly to find a scene more suitable for Demonesses and a Painter to fight.
Jenna didn't hesitate, closely following Franca.
Luo Shan, who thought she would die, was surprised that the Mirror Substitution actually worked, and having gained experience, chose to imitate Franca and Jenna's actions.
The trio quickly passed through the open door, entering a new dimly lit corridor.
Behind them, the two halves of the wooden door swayed several times before finally closing completely.
Franca moved forward while vigilantly observing whether the giant mushroom person was pursuing them, but found that behind the door was dead silence, with no further movement.
"Uh... does each type of psychological trauma only operate in a fixed area?" Franca slowed her pace, making a guess based on her experience and imagination.
Jenna nodded, looking around and said, "Now we need to be alert to the psychological trauma in this area?"
"What psychological trauma?" Luo Shan looked confused.
"Monsters similar to that mushroom person just now," Franca

explained simply.
Luo Shan's eyes turned slightly, and she blurted out, "Monsters transformed from Zhou Mingrui's psychological trauma?"
Very smart... Franca pondered for a moment and said, "It also includes the psychological trauma of evil forces."
Luo Shan was silent for two seconds, about to say something more when she suddenly started coughing.
"Cough cough cough..." She paused and said, "Why do I feel like I've suddenly fallen ill?"
Disease? Can that mushroom person also create mystical pathogens? Jenna and I are both Demoness of Affliction with some resistance to Disease abilities. Brief contact won't infect us, but Luo Shan can't resist, showing symptoms? The symptoms appeared very quickly, this isn't at the level of Sequence 7... After Zhou Mingrui was stimulated, did the power level of the dream city change, starting from the underground part of Mushu Hospital, with no corresponding manifestation in the outside world yet? Jenna vaguely understood the reason and took out a bottle of healing agent from her Traveler's Bag.
She didn't rush to provide treatment for Luo Shan, but pondered and asked, "Can you draw efficacious medicine for yourself?"
Even if the drawn medicine had a limited duration, it could truly cure diseases—as long as all the mystical pathogens were eliminated before the effect wore off, it would work!
At this time, Franca had also figured out the reason and muttered, "That mushroom person is too terrifying!
"What kind of monster is this exactly!"
Luo Shan already felt her forehead burning up. She shook her head and said,
"I don't know exactly what this disease is, nor do I know what medicine to draw to cure it."
"Then drink this." Jenna handed the healing agent to Luo Shan.
She and Franca always maintained a state of having two bottles of healing agent on them, with previously consumed ones either coming from Lumian or being replenished by him.
After experiencing the substitute's death, Luo Shan now fully trusted Franca and Jenna. She took the healing agent, immediately unscrewed the cap, and gulped it down.
In just about ten seconds, she blinked and said, "I think I'm fine now, the illness is gone...
"It's really amazing!"
"Your ability to draw is also amazing," Franca said humbly, pointing to the end of the current corridor, "Let's continue forward, we need to find the elevator lobby quickly, otherwise who knows

what we'll encounter..."
She was still shaken by that giant mushroom person.
Jenna and Luo Shan felt the same, quickening their pace to follow behind Franca.
They had just taken two or three steps when the double doors at the end of the corridor suddenly swung open.
Franca and Jenna reflexively used Invisibility, then considered how to help Luo Shan hide.
Luo Shan had somewhat adapted to the current situation. Using a pencil, she quickly drew a simple, inconspicuous, childlike doodle of a door on the side wall in just two seconds.
This door had no markings and wouldn't lead anywhere. Luo Shan placed her palm on the handle and yanked it backward sharply.
The door, just drawn on the wall, miraculously opened, revealing a dark area about the size of Room 2303's bathroom.
Luo Shan hid inside, then carefully closed the paper-thin door.
The wall surface was left with only a few faint, barely noticeable pencil marks resembling a door outline.
By this time, the double doors at the end of the corridor had fully opened, and an orderly wearing light blue clothing and a white mask slowly entered the current area, pushing a transfer bed.
Franca held her breath and turned her gaze towards the orderly and the transfer bed.
She saw that the orderly's eyes were both empty and wooden, yet seemed to hide deep malice. She saw that the surface of the transfer bed was covered with a thin blanket, but there was no patient or corpse sleeping on it.
What made the back of Franca's neck go cold was that the thin blanket appeared to be in a bulging state, yet there was clearly nothing underneath it.
Covering an invisible object? Franca and Jenna pressed their backs tightly against the side wall, trying hard to increase the distance between themselves and the orderly and the transfer bed.
Amidst the sound of wheels rolling over floor cracks, the orderly maintained a slow, stiff posture, pushing the transfer bed past Franca and Jenna, towards the double doors leading to the corridor with the giant mushroom person.
Only when this transfer bed had pushed open the doors, slowly left the current area, and disappeared from their sight did Franca and Jenna end their Invisibility and return to the middle of the corridor.
Luo Shan also opened the door on the wall and nimbly leaped out.
She didn't forget to casually "close the door".
"How did you know it was safe to come out?" Jenna, who was

about to knock on the door, asked.
Luo Shan raised the pencil in her hand and said with a smile, "I drew a peephole inside."
"Mm, let's continue looking for the elevator lobby." Franca took the lead without hesitation.
Just as they reached the exit at the end of the corridor, that set of double doors suddenly swung open.
It had opened again, when Franca, Jenna, and Luo Shan were less than three meters away from it.
...
Mushu Hospital, Emergency Center.
Based on his experience from the last hospital visit, Zhou Mingrui described the symptoms of acute gastroenteritis and successfully obtained a lab test order from the doctor.
He took this order and turned into the right passageway, heading towards the emergency blood drawing area.
While waiting for his number to be called at the blood drawing area, he clutched his stomach, pretending he could no longer hold on, and quickly left the area, entering the first-floor lobby and walking towards the nearest public restroom.
During this process, he naturally looked around, seeing if he could find any odd details.
He hadn't discovered anything in the emergency center before.
The nearest public restroom was adjacent to elevators 6 to 10. In the dim light, Zhou Mingrui quickly circled to the elevator lobby.
He pressed both "Up" and "Down" simultaneously, observing the elevators' operation.
Soon, two elevators arrived on the first floor, their doors opening almost simultaneously.
Zhou Mingrui glanced left and right, finding nothing unusual about the upward elevator, but the downward one gave him a feeling of leading to hell, to the source of fear.
Is Mushu Hospital's problem underground? Zhou Mingrui silently mused to himself.

Chapter 998: Tremor

Zhou Mingrui stared at the downward elevator until its doors closed.

He suppressed the urge within him, choosing not to take the elevator now to explore the underground area of Mushu Hospital.

He needed more intelligence.

Zhou Mingrui withdrew his gaze and walked towards the elevator lobby exit, intending to go to the nearby public restroom as he had pretended earlier.

Suddenly, he looked towards a corner to the side, as if something was hidden in the darkness there.

Zhou Mingrui stared for a while but found nothing unusual.

He continued walking diagonally forward, turning into the public restroom.

After a few seconds, he hid in the shadows, melting into the darkness, and circled back to this area to quietly observe.

After patiently waiting for nearly five minutes and confirming there were no potential observers in the corresponding corner, he returned to the public restroom, feigning the appearance of having just finished his business, and slowly walked out towards the emergency blood drawing area.

It wasn't until Zhou Mingrui's figure entered the brightly lit area that Lumian's image, with flowing black hair and striking beauty, reflected on the metal elevator doors of the surgery-specific elevator in the lobby.

He wore a light gray T-shirt, a jacket slightly lighter than black water, and off-white trousers that were a bit short due to his height, revealing the edges of his socks.

Strong spirituality, keen intuition, this doesn't seem like just a Sequence 9 Assassin... Lumian sighed softly.

Of course, he knew Zhou Mingrui couldn't be merely a Sequence 9 Assassin.

Earlier, he had hidden in that corner using Invisibility. If Zhou Mingrui had made any move towards the hospital's underground area, he would have immediately tried to stop him. Who knew, he was almost discovered by Zhou Mingrui.

Fortunately, he wasn't just a Hunter and a Demoness. With a Blink, he transferred his position, hiding completely within the metal mirror surface formed by the elevator doors.

Lumian walked out of the elevator, about to stealthily approach the emergency center along the largely unlit lobby, when he suddenly felt a vibration under his feet.

It was like a subtle earthquake, or as if a not-too-violent explosion

had occurred underground.
Lumian stopped, lowered his head, and stared at the stone-tiled floor.
Has something changed in the underground area? Lumian pondered to himself.
...
Seeing the wooden doors swing open before them, Franca pulled Luo Shan, her feet sliding, quickly hiding in the shadows cast by the dim light to the side.
Then, she merged with the shadows, letting Luo Shan press against the wall behind her, using herself as a "shadow" to provide better cover.
Meanwhile, Jenna used Invisibility.
In the blink of an eye, before the wooden doors were fully open, the three had completed their concealment.
This time, it was again an orderly wearing light blue clothing and a white mask pushing a transfer bed in.
But unlike before, there was a patient covered with a thin blanket lying on the transfer bed.
The patient was in her twenties, wearing a loose blue and white checkered hospital gown, her golden long hair docilely spread to both sides, her forehead neither wide nor narrow, smooth and beautiful, her eyes a jade green, her demeanor melancholic and serene.
The most noticeable thing about her was her abdomen, which was greatly swollen, seeming to be over seven months pregnant.
Pushing a patient... there are no wards or examination rooms in the underground area... Franca pondered inwardly.
Of course, she knew that in a place where the dream subconscious's psychological trauma and the Mother Tree of Desire's abyssal symbol merged, rationality was a scarce element.
The foreign pregnant woman lying on the transfer bed might well be a psychological trauma of Mr. Fool or that Celestial Worthy!
Luo Shan, shielded behind Franca, only saw the foreign pregnant woman after the transfer bed had passed their hiding spot.
Her gaze suddenly froze.
That was, that was the woman she had just seen in her dream!
Although at that time one of her eyes had been gouged out, hanging near the socket, her face covered with very deep, fleshless wounds, and head-sized bloody tumors growing from both shoulders, Luo Shan still recognized her at a glance.
Luo Shan bit her lip, not letting herself make any sound of surprise.
Just then, from the highly swollen belly of the pregnant woman

on the transfer bed came the cry of an infant.
"Waaa!"
Franca instantly bristled.
What the hell are you crying for when you're not even born yet?
This cry caused the latent fear in Franca, Jenna, and Luo Shan to explode simultaneously, uncontrollably causing them to make extra movements.
Franca consequently emerged from the shadows, and Jenna could no longer maintain her Invisibility state.
In a flash, the orderly with empty and wooden eyes turned to look at Jenna, and the foreign pregnant woman on the transfer bed also sat up, looking towards Franca and Luo Shan.
Let's go for it! Franca gritted her teeth and concealed her form.
Her idea was to temporarily repel the orderly and the foreign pregnant woman, then seize the opportunity to escape to the next area through the open double doors.
Based on their previous experience, the "monsters" in the current area would not leave their own "territory".
The next second, the whites of the orderly's eyes became more pronounced, a cold aura emanating from his body as he took a large step towards Jenna.
Jenna once again vanished, causing the orderly to grasp at empty air.
Immediately after, her figure quickly outlined behind the orderly, thrusting the sharp dagger in her hand towards the orderly's back.
Pfft!
Her dagger seemed to strike metal and ironwood, only piercing the clothing, unable to penetrate the skin.
Jenna wasn't shocked. She let the quiet, vile Demoness black flame appear on the surface of the dagger, quickly infusing into the orderly's body.
With a whoosh, the orderly, feeling increasingly inhuman, burst into Demoness black flames from the inside out. He silently wailed as his spirituality and life began to rapidly fade.
On the other side, the first thing Franca did was also use Invisibility, while Luo Shan strode forward, darting out over ten meters in an instant.
Franca appeared in front of the transfer bed, a mirror now in her hand, reflecting the image of the foreign pregnant woman.
Almost simultaneously, she pressed her palm, covered in quiet black flames, towards the mirror surface.
Throughout this process, the foreign pregnant woman's reactions seemed rather slow, just like an ordinary person.
She then saw black flames erupting from her belly, hearing the

baby's cries becoming more pronounced.
She let out a shrill and agonized scream, her figure instantly disappearing from the transfer bed.
But when she reappeared in Franca's planned escape direction, the evil black flames were still burning on her body, growing stronger.
Plop! Plop! Plop! The foreign pregnant woman's flesh seemed to melt away, falling to the ground piece by piece.
Feeling her aura rapidly dissipating, seeing the orderly collapse to the ground motionless, Franca actually felt a sense of unreal bewilderment.
Is it resolved just like that?
Was that giant mushroom person from earlier actually an exception, and the "monsters" in Mushu Hospital's underground area are also suppressed at Sequence 7?
No, I shouldn't think like that, raising a flag is bad...
Before Franca could correct her thoughts, she saw the foreign pregnant woman fall, her abdomen tearing inch by inch, as if something was trying to burrow out.
At the same time, the pieces of flesh that had fallen to the ground from the foreign pregnant woman also underwent abnormal changes.
Some merged with the floor tiles, transforming into womb-like shapes, giving birth to square-shaped infants with eyebrows and eyes. Some touched the transfer bed, causing the bluish mechanical bed surface to suddenly bulge, sprouting one after another small beds with human heads and wheels for limbs. Some splattered onto the ceiling, causing the energy-saving lights to suddenly brighten, producing dozens of children with human bodies and light bulb heads...
Franca and Jenna instinctively retreated seven or eight steps towards the direction of the mushroom person, seeming to have been stunned.
Is this the psychological trauma of a great existence?
As expected of a great existence's psychological trauma!
Don't come over here!
I don't want to give birth!
In her terror, Franca drew out the iron-black Inevitable Gun.
She found that the foreign pregnant woman was not completely dead yet, still producing more flesh, and those pieces of flesh were wriggling, seeking new wombs or fathers, constantly giving birth, constantly reproducing.
Moreover, the foreign pregnant woman's abdomen had completely torn open, and the fetus inside was about to crawl out.
Franca forced herself to calm down, aimed at the foreign pregnant

woman's abdomen, and pulled the trigger.
Bang!
A bullet exuding a dim blue-green color shot out, passing through the numerous, oddly shaped infants, accurately hitting the target, burrowing into the foreign pregnant woman's abdomen.
Certain Death!
The cry of the baby in the foreign pregnant woman's belly suddenly became intense and resentful, but it ceased abruptly in the blink of an eye.
Similarly, the foreign pregnant woman stopped secreting flesh, and those that had already separated also withered after giving birth to a new fetus.
Thankfully, Certain Death worked... Seeing this, Franca secretly let out a sigh of relief.
Just then, she, Jenna, and Luo Shan felt the earth tremble.
The tremor only lasted for a second, but Franca and the others saw the new corridor outside the double doors collapsing inch by inch. The walls, rooms, and ceiling there were also falling into an abyss of dense blackness with no visible bottom.
This collapse slowly spread towards the current area.
Franca and Jenna sensed something, one looking up towards the ceiling, the other turning to look at the area where the giant mushroom person was, blocked by the wooden doors.
Franca discovered that the ceiling above them was also falling, but instead of crashing down on them, it was falling directly into the seemingly bottomless dense darkness. Jenna saw that the area where the giant mushroom person was also began to collapse, the collapse spreading towards where they were staying.
Does killing that foreign pregnant woman trigger a change in the underground area?
No, this might be the true appearance of Mushu Hospital's underground area now, a dark abyss containing various psychological traumas... What we walked through and saw earlier was just a disguise influenced by the dream city, with corridors and some rooms symbolizing safe zones...
Franca suddenly had this realization.
"What, what should we do?" Luo Shan finally overcame her terror.
She had first needed eyebleach from the sight of hundreds and thousands of monster infants and their birth process. It shocked her mind before she realized that she and the others seemed to have nowhere to go.

Chapter 999: Opportunity

Seeing the collapse gradually spreading towards their area and hearing Luo Shan's question filled with obvious terror, Franca and Jenna exchanged a glance before decisively telling Luo Shan, "Quick, draw a door that can lead to the outside world!"

Clearly, they could no longer continue forward to find the elevator lobby and emergency exits.

"Okay!" Luo Shan nodded vigorously.

She turned around, holding a pen in one hand and a pencil in the other, and began sketching on the wall.

At this moment, Franca and Jenna noticed that the monster children born from the foreign pregnant woman and various objects were all surging towards them.

They seemed to fear falling into the bottomless abyss and were desperately trying to avoid it, to the point of forgetting their goal of attacking enemies.

Being close to Jenna and the others, the monster children quickly reduced the distance between them to two meters. Some of their eyes once again reflected the figures of Franca, Jenna, and Luo Shan, with their desire to attack growing fierce and violent.

Just then, a thick "ice wall" appeared before them.

A translucent layer of ice in the shape of a hemisphere enveloped Franca and the others inside.

This was created by Demoness of Affliction Jenna.

Seeing the densely packed monsters, some square-shaped, some like small beds, some with light bulb-shaped heads, crawling on the surface of the hemispherical ice wall, trying various ways to break through this barrier, Franca felt her fear of clustered objects and humanoid creatures about to explode simultaneously.

She condensed quiet and sinister Demoness black flames around her, waiting for the moment the first layer of ice wall would shatter.

In just seven or eight seconds, the beautiful crystalline ice wall made a crisp shattering sound under the attack of numerous monster children.

Black flames quickly flew out from around Franca and Jenna, passing through the rapidly expanding cracks, igniting nearly twenty monster children.

They burst into flames all over, wailing and rolling on the spot, obstructing many of their siblings' advance and igniting those around them.

Seizing this opportunity, before the hemispherical ice wall completely collapsed, Franca and Jenna joined forces to create a

second layer of ice wall, only ten centimeters apart from the previous one.
"It's done!" Luo Shan's voice rang out.
While continuing to delay the approach of the monster children, Franca and Jenna expectantly glanced at the pattern on the wall with their peripheral vision.
It was a vivid door outlined by pencil marks and blue ink, with a doorplate at the top bearing the numbers "1502".
This was the door to Luo Shan's home, almost identical to what Franca and Jenna remembered, except for the color difference.
The current one was closer to a sketch!
Luo Shan pressed her thumb to the position corresponding to the door lock, making the fake door on the wall emit an unlocking sound.
Then, she turned the handle and pushed open the door she had drawn to her own home.
The light behind the door was dim, outlining all the items in room 1502, but they appeared unusually illusory.
As the illusion gradually solidified into reality, Luo Shan's joyful gaze suddenly froze.
She saw her windows collapsing, her balcony collapsing, all of them falling towards an abyss filled with dense darkness!
The door Luo Shan had drawn and the passage she had established also collapsed inch by inch, just like the surrounding environment.
"It doesn't work..." Luo Shan uttered, almost in a delirium.
She turned her gaze, filled with undisguised despair yet brimming with hope, towards Franca and Jenna, hoping they could come up with a new solution.
At this moment, the nearest collapse had already swallowed the original corridor, causing the double doors separating the two sides to sway and fall.
This was already inches from Franca and company.
Through the gaps between the monster children, Franca could see more clearly the bottomless dense darkness, and something seemingly hidden in its depths.
That figure, apparently wrapped in a robe, or perhaps the robe itself blown up by the wind.
Even just vaguely glimpsing the outline from a distance, the fear in Franca's heart exploded without warning.
The skin on her face became semi-transparent, and the flesh beneath began to writhe, as if it had gained a certain life of its own.
Instinctively, reflexively, Franca averted her gaze, withdrawing her line of sight.

She suddenly had a realization.
What she had just seen was the thing Mr. Fool's subconscious or the Celestial Worthy's subconscious feared most, their strongest psychological trauma!
It was clearly not subject to the dream's suppression of power levels. If they couldn't escape and fell into the abyss along with the collapsing corridor, falling towards that place, death might be the gentlest and most beautiful outcome.
Franca shook her head violently, shaking off the small amount of "glue" that was clouding part of her thoughts.
As Jenna used a third layer of ice wall to block those monster children, she took out the Ice Amulet and a mirror.
She said to Jenna and Luo Shan, "We'll go through the mirror world. No matter how terrifying the hidden dangers in the mirror world are, they can't be more horrifying than the psychological trauma at the bottom of this abyss!"
Of two evils, choose the lesser!
"Okay." Jenna didn't object, and Luo Shan, lacking experience, chose to trust her two companions.
The Ice Amulet in Franca's hand rapidly lit up with a crystalline glow.
The next second, Franca found that the glass surface of the mirror had somehow already turned pitch black, as solid as rock, impenetrable.
"We can't get in... it's different from before the collapse..." Franca felt a surge of uncontrollable despair.
Were they really going to fall into that bottomless abyss and face the strongest part of a great existence's psychological trauma?
"Can't get in?" Jenna's action of shooting Demoness black flames to ignite the monster children noticeably slowed for a second.
Luo Shan was suddenly dumbfounded, her mouth half-open as she said, "Is there really no way at all?"
Hearing these words, Jenna gritted her teeth and created another hemispherical ice wall.
The surface of the ice wall was quickly covered with various monster children, densely packed, now less than a meter away from Franca and the others.
The collapse of the corridor had also reached this area.
Franca's thoughts raced, her eyes flickering twice as she said, "I still have a way!"
As she spoke, she took out the black eyeball left behind by the reanimated corpse Panatiya and other supplementary ingredients from her Traveler's Bag:
"I'll advance to Demoness of Despair now!

"It's perfect timing, I've been using Disease to secretly influence the monsters in this corridor, which can save a lot of time."
The monster children crawling all over Jenna's ice wall and their companions behind were all within three meters of Franca, numbering close to a thousand.
"It's useless, even a Demoness of Despair is now suppressed to Sequence 7 level, at most Sequence 6, it can't forcibly open a path to the mirror world!" Jenna instinctively refuted Franca.
She wanted to stay calm, but was overwhelmed by the monster children breaking through the ice wall, barely managing to establish a new hemispherical ice wall sixty centimeters away from them.
Franca, while using the black eyeball condensed from the reanimated corpse's Beyonder characteristics to create more virulent viruses, drank a bottle of healing agent and reminded Jenna, "Quickly drink a bottle too, Luo Shan already had one earlier."
Then, Franca explained rapidly, "The important thing is not me advancing to Demoness of Despair, but that every Demoness advancement draws the attention of the Primordial Demoness. I need Her attention!"
Seeing Jenna drink the healing agent, Franca helped maintain the defense line and asked in return, "Does Mr. Fool know about the Primordial Demoness?"
"Definitely." Jenna answered without hesitation.
Mr. Fool's avatar had dealings with the Demoness Sect many times, he must be aware of the existence of the Primordial Demoness.
Franca glanced at the corridor that had already collapsed to the transfer bed and said to Jenna and Luo Shan, "Let's move towards the center; buy more time."
The collapse progress on both sides of the corridor was about the same, but Franca and the others were clearly closer to one side.
Without waiting for Jenna and Luo Shan to respond, Franca suddenly withdrew the force maintaining the ice wall and ran at her fastest speed towards the middle section of the corridor about ten to twenty meters away.
Luo Shan ran even faster.
After the three had determined their positions, Jenna once again condensed an ice wall to block the pursuing monster children, while Franca continued to spread mystical pathogens around.
She explained quickly, "Since Mr. Fool knows about the Primordial Demoness, there must be a manifestation corresponding to the Primordial Demoness in this dream—we just haven't discovered it

yet, and true gods can directly enter the dream city.
"When I advance here, my real self will also advance. Based on our experience, no matter what state the Primordial Demoness is in, whether the situation is good or bad, She will turn Her gaze towards this.
"As a true god, She won't have difficulty discovering that my consciousness is in a real dream, and will likely project Herself in, using Her inherent dream manifestation to truly observe me advancing in the underground area of Mushu Hospital.
"She certainly won't risk descending here, nor does She have the feelings or motivation to save me, but as the ruler of the mirror world, Her mere gaze will likely open a channel between the mirror world and this area, and possibly cause the hidden dangers in the mirror world to temporarily disperse!"
"This can't be guaranteed." Jenna blurted out, her tone anxious and confused.
This place was a product of the fusion of a great existence's psychological trauma and the Mother Tree of Desire's abyssal symbol, and more great existences had projected some power into it. Even if they were all suppressed to mid-low Sequences, could the Primordial Demoness in a poor state break the blockade on the mirror world with just Her gaze?
"There's no such thing as a 100% successful plan, but not trying guarantees failure." Franca quickly responded.
Jenna fell silent, biting her lip before saying with a trembling voice, "This will prevent you from leaving the dream, and if the dream ends soon, you will die because of it..."
Franca, waiting for the mystical pathogens to take effect, was silent for a moment before saying through gritted teeth, "We'll deal with future problems in the future!
"If we don't survive now, there won't be a future!"
"But..." Jenna's voice suddenly choked.
Her mind tried to grasp something, but couldn't hold onto anything.
Franca interrupted her, her expression complex as she mocked her own past naivety and love for fantasy, "After killing the reanimated corpse, obtaining the Beyonder characteristics and supplementary ingredients, knowing that all ritual requirements in the dream city would be lowered to Sequence 7 level, I was thinking, is this, is this giving me an opportunity? When everyone is in a desperate situation, with no other options, to stand up like a hero, consume the potion, break through in the face of danger, forcibly advance, reverse the outcome, save everyone, save the world..."

At this point, Franca's expression suddenly settled.
She calmly looked at Jenna, revealing a bright smile.
"Now, the opportunity has presented itself."

Chapter 1000: Gaze

Jenna looked at the smile on Franca's face and listened to her calm words tinged with self-mockery. She suddenly felt a lump in her throat.

Her gaze swept over the monster children about to break through the newest ice wall, over the collapse that had already swallowed the transfer bed and the orderly. She bit her lip hard and said, "Okay..."

The rest of her words got stuck in her throat, as if ice had melted into hot water.

She could only tell herself that future problems would be solved in the future, and that they would surely find a solution!

Franca estimated the time and began preparing the Despair potion using the black eyeball from the reanimated corpse and the corresponding supplementary materials. Jenna allowed the wet feeling to spread from the corner of her eye to the edge of her face while focusing on blocking the approach of the monster children.

She no longer created her own Disease, leaving these oddly-shaped targets all to Franca.

After the monster children were born, she had also been quietly spreading mystical pathogens.

Luo Shan, who was bewildered and inexplicably terrified by the conversation between the two, also reined in her thoughts and began adding various patterns to Jenna's ice wall to enhance its defense.

In the burst of light, the monster children were unable to break through the ice wall in the shortest time and advance further.

Behind them, the floor tiles of the corridor, the walls on both sides, and the ceiling above kept collapsing. The bottomless dark abyss was getting closer and closer to them.

After a while, some of the monster children began to cough violently, coughing so hard that they slid down from the surface of the ice wall. Others became rigid and could no longer move smoothly.

Those crowded outside the ice wall, separated from Jenna and the others by several meters, were finally caught up by the collapse.

They surged forward like a tide but couldn't get past the bodies of their siblings.

They began to fall towards the dense darkness hiding unknown terrors.

Strong feelings of despair emanated from them, rapidly spreading to their companions clinging to the ice wall surface as their conditions worsened.

Now! Franca raised the bottle, bringing the deep purple potion bubbling with rosy bubbles to her lips.
She drank it without hesitation.
The potion had no taste, or perhaps Franca could no longer distinguish its taste.
She only felt her spirit and thoughts rapidly falling into a lightless, enclosed darkness, plummeting towards an unknown depth.
Something seemed to be calling her there.
Trier, inside a luxurious villa.
Franca, sleeping on the bed, still had her eyes tightly shut, but her hair eerily began to float, gradually growing longer, darker, and thicker.
Madam Judgment, standing guard in the villa's living room, instantly sensed something and Blinked into Franca's room.
Looking at the transformed Franca, Madam Judgment didn't rush to act. Instead, she took out a charm made of gray-white dragon scales, activated it, and made it ethereal.
"There's been a change in the dream. Two of Cups was forced to advance to Demoness of Despair within the dream," Madam Judgment's words combined with the ethereal charm, quickly becoming transparent and merging into the night sky.
At this moment, Madam Judgment felt a certain gaze, a gaze from the Traveler's Bag, from an unknown place, a gaze upon Franca.
Dream city, Mushu Hospital, B2.
Franca's consciousness and spirit floated and fell within the enclosed darkness. She felt countless invisible threads of intense despair extending from the outside world, following their mystical connections to grasp her body.
At the same time, she saw two brilliant starry lights.
Those were the people she cared about, and who cared about her, the anchors that let her know who she was!
The groggy Franca gradually regained clarity, vaguely sensing a gaze full of resentment, hatred, and expectation watching her from somewhere in the deep darkness.
Suddenly, her Traveler's Bag outside the spiritual world began to vibrate, a vibration she could clearly perceive.
It was the Primordial Demoness figurine carved from white bone that was noticeably trembling.
At the same time, Franca discovered an indescribable gaze from above directed at her, penetrating through layers of mirror worlds!
Her hair instantly turned completely black, floating in the air like tentacles, with their tips swelling into spheres, as if about to open into numerous eyes.
Franca's face became even more beautiful, emanating a charm

that even made Luo Shan, a girl who preferred the opposite sex, unable to look away, her heart pounding, like a moth throwing itself into the fire.
Franca struggled to open her eyes and spoke in a voice that seemed to pluck at the strings of the soul, "It's done..."
Jenna stopped maintaining the ice wall and activated the Ice Mirror Charm she had been holding.
In the crystalline light, she felt the surface of the mirror in her other hand ripple with a faint glow, losing its rock-solid texture.
They really could pass through and leave via the mirror world!
The barrier had been broken!
Moreover, Jenna discovered that the dangers previously hidden in the mirror world had also disappeared.
This was beyond her expectations. She had originally thought that the Primordial Demoness's gaze could break through the obstacles and connect to the mirror world, which would have been impressive enough. She never imagined it could actually dispel the hidden dangers.
This was also Franca's confusion.
She struggled to tell Jenna and Luo Shan, "Both of you... go first..."
She was still fighting against the potion's impact, transforming her body, and temporarily unable to move.
If the mirror world hadn't suppressed this advancement to Sequence 7 level, she wouldn't even have been able to speak at this stage!
Jenna didn't hesitate. She gave Franca a deep look, grabbed Luo Shan's arm, and plunged into the compact mirror in her hand.
The compact mirror then fell to the ground as the surrounding ice wall completely collapsed.
However, the monster children closest to Franca had all been infected with severe illness and were no longer able to approach or attack.
In the mirror world, Jenna led Luo Shan through a surreal tunnel, heading towards a corresponding mirror guided by their spirituality.
In the blink of an eye, they reached a new area behind the mirror, able to leave the current world.
Jenna suddenly sensed something and turned her head to look into the depths of the mirror world.
It seemed that some dangerous entity had awakened slightly there, instantly filling the entire mirror world with a sense of terror.
Silently, the mirror world completely collapsed.
"Franca..." Jenna's pupils dilated as she softly called out her

companion's name.
The scene before her eyes meant that Franca would temporarily be unable to escape via the mirror world, and by the time the mirror world recovered, the Primordial Demoness's gaze would likely have ended, and the force isolating the inside from the outside would reappear!
Blood trickled from Jenna's lips as she endured the pain invading her mind. Before the terrifying collapse of the mirror world could rapidly spread to them, she pulled Luo Shan and emerged from the mirror surface.
She knew that blindly returning would only lead to them getting lost in the spatiotemporal turbulence deep in the mirror world, which would be of no help in rescuing Franca.
She planned to go to the first floor of Mushu Hospital and take the elevator back to the underground area!
At this moment, Franca, still in the process of advancing, also discovered the collapse of the mirror world.
She then felt violent tremors like an earthquake at the bottom of the dark abyss.
It was as if certain entities hidden in the dark abyss had been stimulated by the collapsing force of the mirror world and were reacting.
With these tremors, the corridor beneath Franca's feet that had not yet been affected by the collapse suddenly gave way, carrying her and hundreds of monster children into the bottomless dark abyss.
Dammit! Franca hadn't expected this development.
The despair of those monster children became even more intense, solidifying into substance. Franca was also uncontrollably enveloped by the emotions of despair.
This helped her through the final stage of her advancement, causing her floating thick black hair to fall back around her, no longer abnormal, and restoring some of its flaxen color.
Gritting her teeth, Franca used the Demoness's feather-fall technique to slow her descent, allowing her some degree of control.
She chose to move away from the intense psychological shadow she had sensed earlier, that thing resembling a giant shroud, which would surely make her wish for death.
She drifted towards other areas, taking a gamble.
What if the psychological traumas in other parts of the abyss, though intense, aren't fatally dangerous?
As a human, one must hold onto some hope, not give up entirely and fall into complete despair!
...

Jenna emerged from the metal mirror surface of the elevator lobby doors with Luo Shan, immediately seeing the female version of Lumian who had just lifted her gaze from the shaking ground.
She wasn't surprised to see Lumian here and blurted out, "Franca is below, not at B1!
"The mirror world has collapsed!"
Lumian's eyes instantly narrowed.
He didn't ask for details but said directly, "Go to the emergency center and find Zhou Mingrui. See if you can get him to help and go to the underground area.
"As for the rest, leave it to me. I'll handle it."
Zhou Mingrui is at Mushu Hospital now? Both Jenna and Luo Shan were shocked.
Before Jenna could speak, Lumian added in a deep voice, "I had anticipated scenarios where we might have to enter the bottom of Mushu Hospital to attempt sabotage and made some preparations.
"Everyone has their own task. Finding Zhou Mingrui is equally important!"
As he spoke, Lumian had already reached the elevator and pressed the down arrow.
Jenna's vision suddenly blurred.
She didn't stubbornly insist, but gave a terse response and pulled Luo Shan towards the emergency center.
She knew they couldn't put all their eggs in one basket. She knew she couldn't be selfish now. She knew that without godhood, even if she went to the bottom of Mushu Hospital, she probably couldn't be of much help and might even burden Lumian and Franca.
She wished she didn't know these things.
At this moment, she felt her own weakness due to the intense pain, and because of her weakness, she felt even more pain, giving rise to an extreme desire and motivation to change this situation.
Her Affliction potion was fully digested.
Lumian entered the elevator and pressed the "B2" button.
As the elevator began to descend, Lumian looked at his stunningly beautiful reflection in the metal mirror surface with a grim expression.
When the elevator stopped and the doors opened, he quickly stepped out and looked towards the area outside the elevator.
What met his eyes was a darkness as black as an abyss with no visible bottom.
Lumian's gaze instantly froze.
Suddenly, a voice sounded from a dark corner of the elevator lobby.
"Child of God."
Lumian abruptly turned his head to see a person standing in the

shadows by the emergency exit.
It was Lu Yong'an, the dean of obstetrics at Mushu Hospital and a bestowed of the Great Mother.
Lu Yong'an's face was shrouded in darkness. She looked at Lumian and said in a low voice, "To save someone from there, one can only beseech the Mother's help."

Chapter 1001: Choice

Mushu Hospital, in the corridor leading from the first floor lobby to the emergency center.

Luo Shan slowed down to allow Jenna to lead her.

Thud! Thud! Thud! Jenna ran quickly, finally seeing Zhou Mingrui wearing a loose sky blue T-shirt.

At the same time, her gaze swept outside the emergency center, taking in the deep night.

Jenna's footsteps suddenly stopped, and she turned sideways, moving closer to the wall area.

This way, she could no longer see Zhou Mingrui, and he could not see her either.

"What's wrong?" Luo Shan, who had also stopped, asked in confusion.

"It's night now," Jenna replied in a low voice.

"Is that a problem?" Luo Shan was even more bewildered.

Wasn't it established from the beginning that it was night? Otherwise, why would I be dreaming?

Jenna didn't have time to explain to Luo Shan that Zhou Mingrui might have something special hidden at night, and that they hadn't yet had a chance to experiment whether just normal contact with Zhou Mingrui at night would kick them out of the dream.

She said directly to Luo Shan, "It's not convenient for me to talk to Zhou Mingrui at night. You go alone to ask for his help for Luo Fu. Don't worry, I'll observe the situation from the shadows. If anything goes wrong, I'll come out immediately to save you."

Luo Shan knew this wasn't a good time to ask questions. She nodded firmly and said, "Alright!"

After Jenna's figure disappeared into the shadows by the wall, Luo Shan quickly ran into the emergency center.

She immediately saw Zhou Mingrui approaching the exit, seemingly about to leave.

Luo Shan felt a sudden urgency and blurted out, "Zhou Mingrui!"

Zhou Mingrui turned around in surprise, seeing Luo Shan in her short-sleeved pajamas and thin pajama pants.

Why is she here too? Zhou Mingrui's first reaction was that Luo Shan had also come for emergency care—pajamas weren't out of place in the emergency center, but rather fit the situation.

Then, Zhou Mingrui thought that Luo Shan should also be a Beyonder, associated with words like Reporter and Painter, and normally wouldn't have a sudden acute illness.

Not a coincidence? Puzzled, Zhou Mingrui cautiously took a few

steps towards Luo Shan.
After approaching Zhou Mingrui, Luo Shan didn't give him a chance to ask questions. She took a breath and said in a low voice, "Save Luo Fu, she's trapped at the bottom of the hospital."
As she spoke, Luo Shan looked around to prevent anyone from eavesdropping.
Luo Fu? Bottom of the hospital? Zhou Mingrui caught the two most crucial pieces of information.
He still remembered the intense fear he felt when observing the downward elevator earlier, suspecting it led to hell or doomsday.
Before gathering enough intelligence, he didn't dare take the elevator down!
Now, Luo Fu had gone in there and was trapped? Zhou Mingrui instinctively asked Luo Shan,
"Me? Me saving Luo Fu?"
Is this a mistake? I'm just an Assassin with a small amount of supernatural abilities. Both Luo Fu and Luo Shan should be stronger than me, yet they want me to go to the bottom of Mushu Hospital to save Luo Fu?
After hearing the conversation between Franca and Jenna before Franca consumed the Despair potion, Luo Shan had basically confirmed that the current world was indeed a dream. So, she believed that Zhou Mingrui, as the master of the dream, could do anything as long as he "wanted" to!
Luo Shan couldn't start by explaining that this was a dream. She feared it might bring unknown, drastic changes and waste precious time.
She could only ponder for two seconds before saying, "You don't need to go and save her directly. You just need to enter B2 and stand there. That should be enough."
"That works?" Zhou Mingrui was stunned.
Isn't this way of saving someone too frivolous?
I just stand in the corridor of Mushu Hospital's B2, and it will allow Luo Fu to no longer be trapped, able to escape from that area that gives me a sense of hell?
What's the principle behind this?
Finding a male Assassin to serve as a formation node?
Or...
Thinking of this, Zhou Mingrui suddenly had a flash of insight.
Could it be that there's something special about me?
...
In the B2 elevator lobby.
"To save someone from there, one can only beseech the Mother's help?"

Lumian mulled over the words he had just heard, his gaze falling on Lu Yong'an's face.
That face, like a full moon, was covered in shifting light and shadow, unclear and indistinct.
Lumian looked deeply at Lu Yong'an for a few seconds, then said calmly, "I have other methods. For now, I don't need to seek the Mother's help.
"You should return to the obstetrics department. If I really need to beseech the Mother's help, I know what to do."
Lu Yong'an didn't try to persuade him, but slightly bowed her head and said, "Yes, Child of God."
The next second, she turned into the emergency stairwell, heading up the stairs.
Lumian didn't wait for Lu Yong'an to finish climbing the stairs. He quickly turned around, took a few steps to the edge of the elevator lobby, and gazed into the dark abyss that was now within reach.
He then reached into the Traveler's Bag and took out an item.
The item was a pale yellow with red, semi-solidified candle in a glass bottle.
Corpse wax candle!
Lumian hadn't lied to Jenna and Lu Yong'an earlier. He had truly envisioned what to do if he had to raid the bottom of Mushu Hospital and attempt sabotage, and had come up with an initial plan, though without much confidence.
The core of this plan was the corpse wax candle obtained from the Tudor treasury on the Blue Avenger.
Lumian had used a corpse wax candle once before, completing the corresponding secret contract, "seeing" a strange city and sensing an indescribable horror.
He believed that the city and the horror should be some kind of object, will, or existence that could potentially drag all the true gods down with Alista Tudor, occupying the top positions of both the Hunter and Demoness pathways.
In other words, it should be roughly on the same level as Mr. Fool, the Great Mother, the Mother Tree of Desire, and The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings.
Lumian's plan was to light the corpse wax candle here, in B2 of Mushu Hospital, next to the bottomless darkness formed by the combination of the dream subconscious psychological traumas and the abyss symbol of the Mother Tree of Desire, to complete a secret contract and establish a certain connection with that strange city or that horrifying will.
At that time, that will should also be interested in the bottom of Mushu Hospital and the dream city, and this place itself was a key

node where great existences had infiltrated some of their power.
Lumian smiled.
He was looking forward to the chaotic situation that would follow.
He wasn't so concerned about what might happen to himself.
Lumian rubbed his fingers together, producing a black flame that suppressed madness and violence.
Unlike last time when he chose to use the Hunter's flame to light the corpse wax candle, or relying on the ritual fire produced by the friction between the Demoness's black flame and spirituality, this time he used the Flame of Destruction, a flame formed by the amalgamation of the Hunter and Demoness pathways!
This was almost identical to the essence of the corpse wax candle.
The corpse wax candle was made from the corpse oil of the Iron-blooded Knight, a demigod of the Hunter pathway, and the Demoness of Despair, a demigod of the Demoness pathway, blended with other substances.
Using the burning Flame of Destruction, Lumian lit the black wick of the corpse wax candle.
After glancing at the jumping, slightly black candlelight, he turned his gaze towards the dense, dark, heart-chillingly terrifying illusory abyss. With a stunningly beautiful smile on his face, he said calmly, "I'm not here to join you, I'm here to destroy this place."
...
Franca fell deeper and deeper into the dense darkness of the boundless void, unable to find any footing.
Her emotions and spirit seemed to be falling into another abyss, becoming increasingly depressed, despondent, and desperate, gradually giving rise to a touch of malice.
Suddenly, a spreading mass of grayish-white fog appeared below her.
This fog was in a semi-merged state with the dense darkness, indicating that it might also be a psychological trauma rather than a real object.
Franca looked left and right, feeling she couldn't continue falling any further, as she sensed she was about to be bound, becoming a slave of the abyss, just like those orderlies.
She no longer avoided it, falling towards that half-dark, half-light grayish-white fog, constantly muttering,
If it's fortune, it's not misfortune; if it's misfortune, it can't be avoided... If it's fortune, it's not misfortune; if it's misfortune, it can't be avoided... If it's fortune, it's not misfortune; if it's misfortune, it can't be avoided...
As she muttered, Franca made contact with the grayish-white fog,

penetrating into it.
Soon, her feet touched soft, fluffy clouds, and she was suddenly filled with shock, sadness, despair, and pain.
She knew this wasn't actually her inner feelings, but rather the intense emotions permeating this area that had enveloped her, eroding into her mind, making her feel as if she had been corrupted.
Next, Franca saw a blurry, brilliant door of light tinged with a bit of blue-black. The door of light seemed to be composed of countless layers of light orbs, and each orb seemed alive, slowly writhing, some transparent, some semi-transparent.
Franca also saw that black thin lines hung down from above the door of light, suspending one after another nearly transparent and invisible "cocoon".
Those "cocoons" were gently swayed by wind from an unknown source, lightly swinging, sometimes turning.
Franca carefully discerned for a while and found that different "cocoons" contained different people. There were black people, Asians, white people, some wearing jeans, some in bright and gorgeous clothes, some in anime-style outfits, some holding phones. They all had their eyes tightly closed, as if not completely dead yet.
This is very similar to the first psychological trauma we encountered in the corridor, except there was no door of light or "cocoons" before... Franca, still being eroded by the surrounding emotions, suddenly associated it with the hall where Huang Jiajia, Ai Nana, and others were suspended, gaining some understanding but also feeling confused.
She looked carefully again and noticed that three of the "cocoons" were empty. They had split open, and the people inside were nowhere to be found.
Were they sent out?
Where were they sent?
Franca vigilantly guarded against possible details, instinctively moving a few steps to the side.
Another invisible wind blew past, and those "cocoons" swayed again, some turning towards Franca.
Franca's gaze swept over them, her pupils suddenly dilating.
She saw a familiar figure.
It was a man standing upright inside a transparent "cocoon", his head slightly bowed, wearing clothes belonging to the protagonist of Assassin's Creed II.
It was herself!
It was him before the transmigration!

Chapter 1002: The Answer to the Questions

Looking at her past self suspended in the transparent "cocoon", Franca's mind buzzed with many thoughts, like boiling oatmeal.

What exactly is this place?

Is this Mr. Fool's or the Celestial Worthy's psychological trauma?

Was I like this, enclosed in a 'cocoon' hanging above the door of light, from losing my memory until completing the transmigration?"

Are the other 'cocoons' containing other members of the research society?

What do those three empty 'cocoons' represent?

Who hung us up?

This is very similar to a manifestation of the High-Sequence Seer pathway...

Did the Celestial Worthy do this?

So, is this Mr. Fool's psychological trauma?

He...

Just as these thoughts flashed through Franca's mind, behind the brilliant light gate, some of the gray fog dispersed, revealing a sphere.

It was a view of the planet from the moon, from space.

Franca then saw the northern and southern continents, the western continent covered in a layer of grayish-white mist, and the eastern continent sunk in darkness.

At the same time, a voice with a hint of solemnity echoed in her ears:

"This place has an ancient name, called...

"Chernobyl!"

"This place has an ancient name, called...

"Chernobyl!"

"..."

As the voice echoed, Franca stared blankly at the familiar yet strange planet in the depths of the gray fog, at the four continents —east, south, west, and north—which had changed somewhat but were still recognizable. She was as if struck by lightning.

Suddenly, she understood many questions, ones she couldn't find answers to before or had avoided certain answers while seeking other explanations.

Why does this world also have 365 days in a year, with an extra day every four years...

Why does this world also have 24 hours in a day, 60 minutes in an hour, 60 seconds in a minute...

Why the human body structure in this world was identical to

Earth's, and corresponding relationships can be found in most elements...
Why was Mr. Fool's dream a modern city...
Why was Mr. Fool's marionette town called Utopia...
Why were Mr. Fool's avatars called Gehrman Sparrow and Merlin Hermes...
...
Franca stared blankly at the strange yet familiar planet, at the four continents and dreamlike blue oceans in her memory. Salty, wet tears had unknowingly fallen down her face.
Her mind was telling her the answer, but her heart was refusing to accept it.
This world might just be Earth...
Franca's vision was already blurred, but she dared not close her eyes, afraid to see those images that always appeared before her in midnight dreams.
Her heart burst with intense shock, sadness, and immense despair and pain, almost identical to the intense emotions pervading the current area, indistinguishable and seemingly merging:
Perhaps we never left, but we can never go back.
...
Trier, inside a luxurious villa.
In Franca's room, Madam Judgment, Madam Magician, and Madam Justice had gathered by the bedside.
"She's crying..." Madam Judgment, who had been observing Franca's condition, suddenly said.
The corners of Franca's eyes in her sleep had mysteriously become wet, with traces of tears extending to both sides, disappearing into her flaxen hair that had darkened considerably.
She seemed to be having an extremely sad dream.
At this moment, Madam Judgment and Madam Magician couldn't quite understand why Two of Cups would silently cry while dreaming.
They had anticipated what changes might occur in Franca's expression in reality, whether it be twisting in pain, exaggerated in madness, or falling into extreme pleasure, all of which were predictable possibilities.
But why would she cry?
And the tears shed were dominated by sadness and despair.
Could one of her companions have met with misfortune?
Madam Magician cast her gaze towards the other rooms, finding that Lumian, Jenna, Anthony, and Ludwig were all still alive, though the first two—one with an icy expression, the other unable to hide pain and urgency even in dreams.

"Aren't you going to Placate her?" Madam Judgment asked Madam Justice, who was conducting a mental and psychological analysis.
Since the mental corruption and emotional impact experienced in the dream would reflect in reality, treating the corresponding psychological issues and mental illnesses in reality would also truly affect the person in the dream.
In a dream constructed with spirit and psychology at its core, the inside and outside were indistinguishable in this aspect, blending truth and falsehood.
Madam Justice's emerald eyes showed a thoughtful expression. "Two of Cups's current emotions harbor immense despair, which is also a manifestation of her true state.
"And what she needs right now is precisely despair, extreme despair."
Hearing these words, Madam Magician couldn't help but turn her head to look at the night sky to the east.
She said in a low voice, "Yes, Two of Cups has already forcibly advanced by leveraging the uniqueness of the dream. What she needs most now is despair, intense and immense despair.
"This can help her quickly digest the potion.
"I'm not sure exactly what she's seeing or experiencing now, but from the current situation, the 'making oneself despair' part should be enough. Later, we need to find an opportunity to 'make others despair'."
Madam Justice nodded slightly and said, "Once Two of Cups's current despair subsides somewhat, I'll provide psychological treatment.
"Now, she might need other help."
As this Major Arcana card holder wearing a green dress with white patterns spoke, Madam Magician half-opened her arms.
In front of her, points of starlight gathered, condensing into an illusory but brilliant double door.
This door slowly opened, revealing a thin layer of grayish-white fog inside.
That represented the dream city.
As an Angel of the Door pathway, Madam Magician had no problem opening a door and forcibly entering Mr. Fool's dream if she really wanted to.
Of course, whether such a forceful entry would result in her being instantly observed, losing control, or unknowingly becoming a marionette of the Celestial Worthy remained unknown.
In this matter, the unknown referred to which of the two outcomes would occur, not whether these two outcomes would appear.

According to Madam Magician's astromancy results, there was only a very small chance that she would encounter nothing, and this was based on Mr. Fool having a certain advantage or the two great existences happening to be in a phase of intense mutual combat.
What she was about to do was certainly not to barge in and rescue Franca, but to open such a door, establish the corresponding channel, and assist Madam Justice, who was a Dreamweaver.
Originally, Madam Justice could only monitor changes in part of the dream situation, and that was in a vague perceptual way. With such a door, she could directly exert some influence on certain areas of the dream or corresponding characters.
In this situation, she, who had been kicked out of the dream three times, couldn't do much, but what they wanted to convey to Franca was just a brief sentence.
As the door to the dream city opened, Madam Justice closed her emerald eyes that seemed able to reflect the human soul, raised her right hand, and began to sketch dreamlike, unreal symbols in the air.
...
Mushu Hospital, B2, edge of the elevator lobby.
Lumian, gazing at the illusory dark abyss, inhaling the faintly sweet and warm dark fragrance, enduring the agitation in his bone marrow and desires, feeling as if his entire being was about to ignite, entered a state of ethereal quietude.
His mind and thoughts gradually dispersed, becoming increasingly numb to the passage of time.
Finally, he "saw" a fog tinged with a dark hue, feeling as if he was walking through such a fog.
Just like before, he saw the outlines of various buildings, saw things similar to trains running on blurry streets, saw ladies with round fans covering their faces riding in human-pulled canopied two-wheeled carts approaching him.
He flew up, flew towards the depths of the dense fog, flew towards somewhere in this strange city.
There remained a peculiar high tower that was only a shadow, with indescribable gloom and terror emanating from the bottom of the tower.
Lumian, suppressing the fear in his heart and the trembling of his body, descended, entered the tower, and headed straight for the bottom.
He then saw an ancient well melding into the darkness, saw that the four walls of the ancient well were built with moss-covered stone blocks, saw iron-black chains locked onto the stone blocks,

hanging down into the depths of the ancient well.
These chains had numerous reliefs on their surface, but they were blurry, making it difficult for Lumian to discern.
Unable to control himself, Lumian stuck out his head, trying to look towards the bottom of the ancient well.
What met his eyes was a dense, eerie blood-red color.
It seemed to be formed by an unknown amount of blood.
Next, Lumian smelled a fishy odor mixed with a sense of rust.
He bewilderedly turned his gaze to his nose, finding that blood had somehow already flowed from his nostrils, like real blood.
Suddenly, Lumian's peripheral vision caught his own head and face reflected clearly in the blood-colored well water.
The palm of his right hand instantly became scorching hot, with a manic and violent aura surging out like a flood.
This was blocked by a cold and deathly stillness.
Outside the spiritual secret deed process, Lumian on B2 of Mushu Hospital, his body visibly trembled.
His hair floated up, his face sometimes the stunning Lumina, sometimes the more handsome security guard Li Ming, his chest sometimes swelling, sometimes flattening, his aura sometimes feminine and seductive, sometimes masculine and violent...
He kept switching between these two states, and if he lacked either one, his body might not be able to withstand it, quickly collapsing and becoming an out-of-control monster.
Lumian at the edge of the ancient well sensed a terrifying will that could destroy everything, feeling It casting Its gaze from the depths of the ancient well, observing him.
Even with the ability of an Ascetic, even while forcibly controlling himself, Lumian couldn't help but break away from the secret deed ritual and open his eyes.
His right palm was still stinging, more intensely than ever before, his eyes a deep black, a black so deep that not even death existed within it, devoid of any life.
Before him, in that void of dark abyss, a vortex suddenly appeared, spiraling towards the bottom.

Chapter 1003: Incantation

The bottomless darkness seemed to be pulled by some force from deep within, or forcefully pressed down by an invisible giant hand, causing it to suddenly collapse and form a frantic vortex several meters wide.

This vortex kept spinning towards the end of the darkness, getting deeper and deeper, like an ancient well.

At the same time, all the mirrors on Lumian's body shattered with a series of cracking sounds, and the metal elevator doors were suddenly covered with a grayish-white layer, as if they had been abraded by sand.

Immediately after, Lumian took a step forward and jumped into the vortex.

With the appearance of the vortex, he vaguely sensed his Mirror Substitution left with Franca.

At the same time, he knew that the vortex was created by the gaze and power he had drawn through the secret deed ritual, and that it would lead to his intended destination. He knew that if he kept falling in the vortex, he would likely reach where Franca was trapped.

He didn't let his body float down slowly like a feather, but maintained a free-fall posture, gaining speed. Wind howled in his ears, and his eyes saw only the deep darkness that had become steep cliffs.

...

Crack! Crack! Crack!

The glass windows on every floor of Mushu Hospital shattered explosively, and all mirror-like objects were either covered in scratches or turned to stone-like substances.

In the emergency center, all the glass that had shown mirror-like reflections due to the night broke with a crack, including several pairs of dark-colored glasses.

Zhou Mingrui and Luo Shan were startled too, feeling as if a huge explosion had occurred nearby.

However, they didn't hear any corresponding sound, nor did their ears ring continuously.

In the environment where patients, nurses, and doctors had all suddenly become panicked, Zhou Mingrui had a sudden flash of insight and said to Luo Shan in a low voice, "The anomaly from underground?"

"Possibly, I'm not sure either..." Luo Shan didn't know much more than Zhou Mingrui, she could only guess that Luo Fu might have done something underground, or encountered something.

Zhou Mingrui spoke faster, continuing to ask, "Why can I rescue Luo Fu just by standing in B2?"
Luo Shan stammered in response, "I-It was a guess...
"Be-because there's something special about you!"
As expected... Zhou Mingrui quickly pressed, "What's special?"
"You... I'm actually not that clear on the specific details." Luo Shan suddenly realized that if she explained clearly, there might be unexpected changes, so she forced the topic back on track, "I'm not sure if you going to stand in B2 will really be effective. If nothing changes, th-then that's all we can do. If there are changes, but not enough for Luo Fu to escape, then maybe you'll need to do something more. What exactly to do depends on the actual situation. At that time, you can choose not to do it, but if you're willing, I-I will walk in front of you!"
Zhou Mingrui looked at Luo Shan deeply, and after a few seconds of silence, said, "Okay."
Eh... Luo Shan, who had planned to continue pleading, was stunned.
"Let's go now," Zhou Mingrui ran towards the corridor leading to the nearest elevator, "Nothing is more important than saving a life!"
Luo Shan hurriedly followed, easily taking the lead in front of Zhou Mingrui.
Their actions were not at all conspicuous in the emergency center where the chaotic state had not yet completely subsided.
Seeing this, Jenna, hiding in the shadows, quietly let out a sigh of relief.
After Zhou Mingrui and Luo Shan had run a distance, she walked out of the shadows, preparing to conceal herself and follow behind, ready to deal with any unexpected situations.
At this moment, she felt a suffocating pain, as if the blood in her body wanted to burst through her skin and splash out.
It was like a deep-sea fish being directly "teleported" into mid-air.
Moreover, Jenna also felt her thoughts stalling and her joints stiffening.
About to be kicked out... of the dream?
Even if it's... through Luo Shan... at night... indirectly... informing Zhou Mingrui... of Beyonder matters... it will... lead to... oneself... being kicked?
Jenna wanted to hold on a bit longer, to see if Zhou Mingrui going to the underground area would bring about good changes, but she was powerless to resist. She had no choice but to leave this world, following the force that was kicking her out of the dream.
...

Trier, inside a luxurious villa.
Standing by Franca's bed, facing the door of starlight and the grayish-white fog, Madam Justice frowned.
"I can't sense Two of Cups, I can't establish contact with her.
"I was clearly using her body as a medium..."
Madam Magician thought for two seconds and said, "In the dream city, apart from what we haven't explored and don't know about yet, there are only three places where such a situation would occur, where the connection between soul, consciousness, and body would be severed.
"One is inside the police station, two is Yangdu Prison, and three is the underground area of Mushu Hospital."
"If she were arrested or imprisoned, Two of Cups wouldn't be this desperate," Madam Judgment made a judgment, "She must have entered the underground area of Mushu Hospital, for unknown reasons."
While Madam Magician and Madam Judgment were thinking and talking, Madam Justice continued to try.
Suddenly, they all turned their heads towards the room where Lumian was sleeping.
At this moment, they felt the ground trembling inexplicably, as if a volcano was erupting deep underground.
This caused all the mirrors and glass windows in the entire villa to make trembling sounds, almost shattering.
After just a few seconds, Madam Justice's emerald-like eyes suddenly lit up.
"I've sensed Two of Cups!" She said while once again sketching transparent symbols in the air that were like dreams and illusions.
As soon as the symbol was completed, it passed through the brilliant starlight door like a butterfly from a dream, diving into the grayish-white fog.
After doing this, Madam Justice said to Madam Judgment and Madam Magician, "Seven of Cups has been kicked out of the dream, we can have her come over to tell us the specific situation."
...
In the grayish-white fog where a brilliant door of light and an illusory planet stood tall, echoing with words like "Chernobyl".
Franca gazed at everything before her, her whole being seemingly numb, only her vision becoming increasingly blurred, unable to clear up no matter what.
At this moment, she heard a voice so distant it seemed to come from the edge of the sky, belonging to Madam Justice. "Shout 'Leodero' in ancient Hermes."

Franca suddenly awoke, as if she had just had a long nightmare that she dared not and was unwilling to recall.
Her mouth trembled, not making a sound, as if she wanted to sleep here forever.
After several seconds, Franca finally called out in a low voice, "Leodero!"
...
Above that grayish-white fog, Lumian's feet stepped on the surface of the thin gas like clouds, but he couldn't penetrate through to enter inside.
He felt that this fog was highly similar to the fog that sealed off the Samaritan Women's Spring, and believed that if he still had Mr. Fool's seal on him, he would definitely be able to fall directly inside, rather than being blocked outside.
After trying two methods and failing, Lumian turned his gaze to his right palm.
The Blood Emperor brand on his palm had undergone some changes when the secret deed ritual was forcibly completed. Its color had become deeper and blacker, no longer like dripping fresh blood, but closer to the dark red of oxidized blood.
And this dark red seemed to have subtly merged with the paleness covering this patch of skin.
Lumian wasn't yet clear on what such changes would bring, he just wanted to use this brand and the corpse wax candle to quickly perform another secret deed ritual.
Suddenly, in the night sky of the dream city, clouds piled up in layers.
Countless small electric snakes jumped and gathered between these clouds, quickly forming a huge, tree-like lightning bolt.
As soon as this lightning appeared, it crossed the distance between heaven and earth, illuminating the entire city.
It passed over numerous lightning rods, struck into Mushu Hospital, and drilled underground.
The hair on Lumian's body stood up uncontrollably, and he instinctively took two steps back.
Almost simultaneously, a bright light flashed before his eyes, making him unable to see the deep darkness and grayish-white mist anymore.
The afterimage of a silver-white tree-like lightning remained in his pupils.
When his vision recovered, Lumian found a slowly healing hole had appeared in the grayish-white fog.
He didn't hesitate, took a step forward, and jumped in.
He passed through the outer fog and landed in front of the brilliant

light door, seeing Franca staring blankly at him, with the hair on her skin and some of her head standing up.
Franca's eyes reflected Lumian, whose gender was constantly switching, but the speed was slowing down, gradually fixing towards the female form.
"Let's go!" Lumian didn't say much, grabbed Franca's arm, and directly activated the black mark on his right shoulder.
Spirit World Traversal!
With the vortex still existing, Lumian could sense some areas of the outside world!
The figures of the two immediately disappeared from in front of the brilliant door of light, with the hole above getting smaller and closer to disappearing.
Lumian, carrying Franca, traveled through the spirit world layered with various color blocks, heading towards the predetermined safe location.
Normally, he would reach the destination in just one second, but for some unknown reason, he now felt as if he was bound by layers of viscous liquid and invisible shackles, moving very slowly, with a trend of getting even slower.
Next, Lumian saw deep, dense darkness sweeping in from "behind", rushing towards the two of them.
The vortex had disappeared.
In that darkness, there was a blurry, huge figure standing on a lightless water surface, and an ancient mirror slowly outlining.
Lumian gritted his teeth, traveling forward with all his might.
Just as he was about to touch the "exit", and the dark abyss was about to engulf him and Franca, everything suddenly became calm.
Lumian suddenly felt at ease, like a criminal who had escaped from prison, instantly passing out of the spirit world and arriving in a shadowy corner of the emergency center at Mushu Hospital.
His spiritual intuition told him that Jenna was here.
...
Mushu Hospital, B2.
Zhou Mingrui and Luo Shan, having overcome their intense fear, walked out of the elevator together.
Almost simultaneously, Zhou Mingrui inexplicably felt relaxed, his feelings of fear and dread dissipating completely.
He frowned in confusion and said to Luo Shan, "Where is Luo Fu trapped?"
Luo Shan looked at the dim but normal white corridor outside the elevator lobby, falling into bewilderment and deep thought.
"Shouldn't it have already completely collapsed..." she muttered to

herself.

Chapter 1004: The Solution

Seeing Zhou Mingrui looking at her, waiting for an answer, Luo Shan said uncertainly, "It seems like things are back to normal..."

She had thought Zhou Mingrui wouldn't believe her judgment. After all, they hadn't encountered anything or seen any signs of danger, and they still didn't know if Luo Fu had been rescued. How could she say everything was "back to normal"?

To her surprise, Zhou Mingrui nodded thoughtfully. "I think so too."

After a couple of seconds, Zhou Mingrui asked, "Do we still need to look for Luo Fu?"

"I-I'll take another look..." Luo Shan cautiously walked to the edge of the elevator lobby and peeked out.

She looked around and felt that aside from being too quiet with no one passing through, there wasn't much difference between this underground area and any other hospital basement.

...

Emergency Center, in a shadowy corner.

Lumian and Franca simultaneously saw Jenna, dressed in a nightgown, her eyes dazed and unsure of what to do.

She's been kicked out of the dream... Both Lumian and Franca quickly came to the same conclusion.

At that moment, Jenna also spotted Franca and Lumian. The tension and worry in her heart suddenly eased.

Without saying much, Lumian grabbed Jenna's arm with his other hand and disappeared with her into the edge of the shadows.

The three of them soon returned to Room 2303 in Dechuang Garden.

After checking the room's condition, Lumian said to Jenna, "Everything's fine now. Get some rest."

He wasn't sure how the dream Jenna would "rationalize" what had just happened, so he kept his explanation vague to avoid any cognitive conflict.

As for the teleportation, it was impossible to hide it any longer. After all, Zhou Mingrui had already become deeply aware of the supernatural powers at play, and there were indeed quite a few Beyonders active in the dream city.

Jenna, surprised, glanced around the familiar environment and obediently replied, "Okay."

After she entered the room and lay down on the bed, Lumian closed the bedroom door for her, then turned to Franca and said,

"Let's go back to Mushu Hospital now. We'll talk about what happened once we're there."

Franca didn't ask why and slowly nodded.

Using teleportation, Lumian took Franca to the greenery outside Mushu Hospital and turned his gaze towards the emergency center and the hospital building.
Seeing the shattered glass and the scorched parts of the walls, Lumian finally said to Franca, "I think what happened today was too much of a coincidence. Zhou Mingrui came to investigate the situation at Mushu Hospital, and at the same time, you ended up in the underground area."
"What exactly happened?"
Hearing the word "coincidence," Franca's emotions wavered slightly.
She pulled herself together and recounted how she and Jenna had found themselves in the underground of Mushu Hospital after falling asleep, how they encountered Luo Shan, her suspicions, and the psychological traumas they later encountered.
"At the time, the corridor started collapsing." Franca stopped speaking and fell silent again.
Lumian glanced at her but didn't press for details. Instead, he mused aloud, "It really was a coincidence. If you look at the events separately, it's logical that Zhou Mingrui, prompted by my warning during the day and his own initiative, chose tonight to investigate Mushu Hospital. Similarly, it's plausible that the force lurking in Luo Shan's room or nearby, taking advantage of her psychological traumas and the dream's nature, 'brought' you into the hospital's underground. Both seem reasonable and could have happened naturally."
"But the fact that these two things happened at the same time and influenced each other makes it obvious that something was off."
"And at the same time, I received a tipoff from Lu Yong'an and followed Zhou Mingrui to sneak into Mushu Hospital."
Franca instinctively said, "But who could set up an arrangement for Zhou Mingrui?"
"They didn't need to arrange him. Arranging us was enough." Lumian, still in his Demoness of Despair state, let out a cold laugh. "When Zhou Mingrui would investigate Mushu Hospital was uncertain, but once he was spotted, they could trigger the other side."
"The force lurking in or near Luo Shan's room must have been there for a while. Why didn't it act sooner or later? Why tonight?"
Franca fell silent for a moment, as if she had finally regained her ability to think, and said, "Was Lu Yong'an arranged as well?"
"Not necessarily. It's possible they discovered my problem as a Child of God and knew something would happen tonight, so they lured me in, using your predicament to force me to become the

true Child of God." After thinking for a few seconds, Lumian added, "It's also likely that Lu Yong'an isn't like Grimm, a dream persona influenced by the Great Mother. She has an external consciousness."
At this point, Lumian paused, his gaze cold as he muttered to himself, "A guardian for women and children..."
...
Inside Mushu Hospital, the power system of the building hadn't been affected by the lightning strike. Only the ground separating the upper and lower floors showed a very obvious charred area, and one of the elevators had stopped functioning.
Lu Yong'an walked down the dimly lit corridor and reached a certain room.
A wooden sign hung outside the door, with Chinese characters written on it: "Dean's Office."
She knocked and entered, speaking to the person beside the shattered glass window.
"She still didn't choose the Mother's help."
"I see," a voice responded.
...
Trier, inside a luxurious villa.
Jenna observed Franca's "sleeping state" while recounting their ordeal and Franca's decisions to Madam Judgment, Madam Magician, and Madam Justice.
After she finished, Madam Magician nodded thoughtfully and said, "It's still unclear what exactly we were supposed to gain from tonight's events, or what the true purpose was..."
Before she could finish her sentence, Madam Justice, looking at the sleeping Franca, said,
"Two of Cups has left the underground area of Mushu Hospital. I can now sense her and her surroundings."
Upon hearing this, Jenna's body swayed slightly, as if she had lost the strength to even keep herself upright due to a sudden sense of relief.
Her breathing became heavy, and after a few seconds, she asked, "It's over?"
"Not entirely," Madam Magician said, taking her gaze off the sleeping Franca.
Jenna seemed to realize something and asked, with deep concern, "Right, she held the ritual in the dream, cleverly advancing to Sequence 4 and becoming a Demoness of Despair. It's unknown how long it will take her to fully digest the Despair potion, and..."
Jenna suddenly stopped, unable to finish her sentence.
What she had been about to say was, "And our goal is to awaken

Mr. Fool as soon as possible, to end this dream, but that would conflict with the conditions for Franca's survival."
In front of the Tarot Club's Major Arcana card holders, she dared not utter those words, fearing the brutal answer she might receive.
"I understand your concern, but that's not really an issue. Or, to put it another way, it's not as serious as you think."
"Huh?" Jenna was surprised, both delighted and bewildered.
Madam Justice maintained her soft smile and explained, "First, Two of Cups has already made considerable progress in digesting the Despair potion. She's completed the part about 'making herself despair.' The next step is to find opportunities to make others despair. If she can refine her acting principles further during this process, the digestion will go even faster."
Jenna blinked, confused.
"She's already digested nearly half of the Despair potion, right after advancing?"
"Yes," Madam Magician agreed, her tone carrying an understanding note. "It's quite similar to Lumian's situation at the time. Except Lumian quickly made two boon demigods despair..."
"Exactly," Madam Magician continued, nodding knowingly. "Given the nature of your circumstances and how things unfolded, it was almost inevitable that people would fall into a state of despair. Mr. Fool's psychological traumas may also contain elements that push Franca into complete despair—things that sever her hopes and desires entirely."
Jenna's eyes moved slightly, and she muttered, "Quite the coincidence..."
Madam Justice sighed with a smile. "Yes, that's one reason. But the other reason why I said that Two of Cups' dream advancement isn't too serious is because, given a little time—just a few minutes—she could return to reality without dying, though there would be other costs."
"Really?" Jenna was both surprised and confused.
Madam Justice chuckled lightly and explained, "While we're limited in what we can do, there are still many things we're capable of.
"For example, a Sun pathway Unshadowed can extract Beyonder characteristics, even from a Beyonder, layer by layer, from high to low. Though Two of Cups advanced in the dream, her reality also advanced, which is why she can't leave the dream before fully digesting her potion."
"In other words, we could have Mr. Sun extract the Demoness of Despair's Beyonder characteristic from Two of Cups in reality, and I would stabilize her mental state during the process. Once her body

in reality regresses to the level of a Demoness of Affliction, there would be no more concern about her losing control upon leaving the dream."
"Of course, this solution would leave some problems behind, some quite serious ones, which is why we didn't mention it as a solution before. But compared to losing her life in the dream, these issues are manageable."
Jenna stood there, dazed.
The dream advancement affected reality, and regressing in reality would cause a similar effect in the dream?
If you can't influence the dream, then change the state of reality?
...
Outside Mushu Hospital, in the greenery.
Hidden in the shadows, Lumian observed the hospital building, the patients coming and going, and the emergency response personnel who had just arrived, but he didn't spot any targets of note.
After a long silence, Franca finally spoke. "They might have already left. Maybe they never showed up in the first place."
"Yeah, you could check some short videos. With the glass shattered and the building struck by lightning, I'm sure a lot of people recorded it. Maybe we'll find something."
"Right." Lumian took out his phone and began scrolling through local news, not missing a single video.
When he reached a video titled "Oh my god, all the glass shattered," he suddenly spotted a familiar figure in the corner of the frame, near the edge of the emergency center.
That figure had messy blonde hair, blue eyes, short eyebrows, and a clear stubble on his face. He was wearing a black shirt.
Lumian's gaze instantly froze.
It was Grisha.
Grisha, Peng Deng's co-renter!

Chapter 1005: Investigating Hidden Dangers

Based on the nature of tonight's events, Lumian had made some guesses and was prepared to see certain dream manifestations, but the person who appeared at the emergency center was completely unexpected: it was Peng Deng's co-renter, Grisha!

The fact that he and Peng Deng are sharing a place did hint at something unusual about him. We'd even observed him before but never managed to figure out who he corresponded to in the real world... *Could he be the mastermind behind tonight's events? What is his real objective?* Lumian's mind raced, his confusion deepening.

He had initially locked in on the individual that the Aurora Order put their faith into as the one orchestrating everything tonight, hoping to confirm a few things. But Grisha didn't fit the "I'm watching, listening, and aware" profile—he was eccentric, paranoid, and rude.

"Him?" Franca, slower to react than usual, leaned over to take a look at the screen frozen on Lumian's phone.

Her sudden shock made her more animated.

"Unexpected discoveries are still valuable," Lumian said, already calm.

"Yeah," Franca replied, not saying much more.

Lumian wasn't in a rush to leave. He pulled out a cracked makeup mirror and began focusing intently.

His actions caught Franca's attention. She tilted her head to look at him, slightly puzzled. "What are you doing?"

"I'm checking if the mirror world has recovered and whether the broken fragments have formed a new area behind the mirror," Lumian explained briefly. "Luo Shan didn't bring her phone, and I don't have any other abilities to contact her. I need to use the mirror world to send her a message that you're safe and that she can leave the underground area with Zhou Mingrui.

"There's no urgent matter now, but what if Zhou Mingrui does discover something?"

Franca was stunned for a moment. "Zhou Mingrui went underground? Won't that be a problem?"

The basement of Mushu Hospital was a mixture of subconscious psychological traumas and a symbolic abyss tied to the Mother Tree of Desire. Even if it couldn't physically endanger Zhou Mingrui, it might force him to confront past traumas, awakening strong stimuli that could bring significant changes. Those changes could be either extremely good or extremely bad, which was why Lumian's team hadn't wanted Zhou Mingrui to enter Mushu

Hospital's basement at this stage.
Lumian glanced at Franca and chuckled. "Plans never keep up with changes. The most important thing just now was rescuing you. Everything else can be dealt with later or patched up. If worst comes to worst, this mission fails completely, and they send in another team. At worst, we all face the apocalypse. But I couldn't let you die here tonight."
Franca stared at Lumian for a few seconds, unable to find words.
After a moment, she looked away and sighed. "There are some things that can never be made up for..."
Hearing that sigh and those words, Lumian finally felt like Franca had come back to life from the deadened state she'd been in earlier.
He didn't ask what she meant, waiting for her to sort out her own thoughts. He gazed at the cracked mirror in his hands.
"The mirror world has recovered, and the larger mirror fragments have regained their mystical properties."
With that, Lumian whispered a few words, imbuing them with a flickering, dark shimmer before sending them into the largest piece of the cracked mirror.
...
Mushu Hospital, B2.
Luo Shan led Zhou Mingrui, creeping cautiously along the corridor, glancing around as she searched for the missing Luo Fu.
Just as she looked toward one of the rooms and Zhou Mingrui gazed in the opposite direction, she spotted a piece of shattered glass on the ground. Words flickered across it: "Luo Fu is already home."
Phew... Luo Shan quickly turned to Zhou Mingrui and said, "I got a message. Luo Fu escaped."
Zhou Mingrui studied Luo Shan for a moment but didn't ask how she received the message.
He'd noticed earlier that she seemed to have rushed out of the house, forgetting to bring her phone.
After they left Mushu Hospital's basement and Zhou Mingrui sent Luo Shan back to Dechuang Garden, she saw Lumina and Luo Fu in the entryway.
"You two just got back as well?" Luo Shan blurted out.
Holding two mirror fragments, Lumian glanced around and replied, "We had to deal with the hospital's surveillance."
Even though tonight's events weren't tied to any criminal case and were considered a "natural disaster," meaning no police investigation, Lumian thought it was better to play it safe.
Luo Shan was stunned for a couple of seconds.

Quite the seasoned criminal, aren't you...
Lumian then addressed Luo Shan, "Thanks for your help. Without you bringing Zhou Mingrui to the basement in time, both Luo Fu and I would've been swallowed by that illusory abyss."
A smile appeared on Luo Shan's face, though she tried to be modest.
"It was Zhou Mingrui who was willing to risk his life to save someone. He's always been a good person."
"It's impressive that you convinced him so quickly," Lumian said, not sparing any praise.
"Not really," Luo Shan said, feeling a little uncomfortable as she looked away.
She walked briskly into the elevator that had just arrived on the first floor.
After stepping in, Lumian turned to Luo Shan and said, "We'd like to inspect your apartment, to identify any hidden threats."
"Sure, okay!" Luo Shan remembered how she had inexplicably ended up in the hospital's basement.
Without uncovering the lurking threat in her room or nearby, she wouldn't be able to sleep soundly.
When they arrived at Room 1502, Lumian naturally began inspecting every corner, while Franca, finally recovering her energy, silently touched various objects.
After a few seconds, Lumian stood in front of the living room's glass window and spoke to Luo Shan, who was standing near the coffee table.
"I'll perform a Magic Mirror Divination and see if I can get any answers or hints."
Luo Shan nodded repeatedly.
Lumian reached out toward the transparent glass, which had turned into a mirror under the night sky, and began chanting the appropriate incantation.
He was only able to perform Magic Mirror Divination that relied on his own spirituality.
After posing his question, the surface of the glass rippled with a dark shimmer.
The shimmer settled, revealing a scene of a parrot with colorful feathers in a painting.
"That?" Luo Shan quickly turned her head to look at the wall behind her.
Did my own drawing betray me?
Almost simultaneously, the colorful parrot flew out of the painting, attempting to escape from Room 1502.
But the doors and windows were locked, and it repeatedly hit the

walls.
"Why?" Luo Shan shouted.
The parrot responded in a crisp, human voice. "I'm not your puppet. I serve..."
Before it could finish speaking, its body suddenly disintegrated. Feathers fell one by one, followed by flesh that dripped like melting paint.
In just two or three seconds, the colorful parrot had turned into countless droplets of paint, splattering onto the cream-colored tiles.
"It was controlled by someone else," Lumian concluded.
"How is that possible?" Luo Shan was shocked and confused.
This was something I painted stroke by stroke. *How could it be controlled by someone else?*
If it was the other version of me reviving within me and secretly influencing my creation, I could accept that. But an outsider? How?
Lumian glanced at Luo Shan.
"Never trust anything completely. That applies to others, things you've created, and even yourself."
"I understand..." Luo Shan recalled her previous experiences, thinking of that other version of herself.
Lumian thought for a moment and suggested, "You should stay at our place tonight, just in case there's another incident."
He planned to take pictures of every item and corner of Luo Shan's apartment tonight, then send them to Anderson to check for any remaining issues.
"Okay," Luo Shan quickly agreed.
Regardless of the parrot's situation, she had already planned to pack her things and find a decent, reasonably priced hotel to stay in for a few nights.
After settling Luo Shan in Room 2303 with Jenna, Lumian took Franca with him to Room 1502 to photograph every part of the apartment, making sure to leave nothing out.
Once he finished, he immediately sent the photos to "A name that leaves a deep impression on you," ending with the question: "Can you spot any potential problems in these photos?"
After a few minutes, Anderson Hood replied: "Are you inviting me to play 'Spot the Difference'?"
"Something like that," Lumian responded casually.
He waited patiently until four or five minutes later, receiving another message from Anderson.
"If it were me, I'd show someone photos with absolutely no problems and ask them to find something wrong."
Does that mean... there's nothing wrong? Lumian thought to

himself.
Anderson Hood sent another message. "That blank spot on the painting is an eyesore. Add some paint to it."
Lumian nodded thoughtfully before asking: "Can you control things painted by others?"
"There are many ways to control painted objects. One is to become a symbol within the painting's world. Another is to give them a more complete life. A third is to imbue them with humanity. A fourth is to reconfigure the information they're composed of, given their essence as information. And lastly, there's the fact that they possess spirituality—you could turn them into your marionette..."
Anderson uncharacteristically provided a lengthy explanation, finishing with: "After hearing all that, don't you feel like every possibility you imagined can't be ruled out?"
"You're giving me so much detail just so I'll say 'yes,' aren't you?" Lumian replied without emotion.
In his opinion, identifying the hidden danger in the room wasn't the most important thing. They had already confirmed that Luo Shan was being watched by some force or enemy. If they didn't root out the other side and eliminate them, today's hidden danger would be dealt with, but tomorrow a new one would appear.
Too bad that parrot wasn't put under control and couldn't finish what it was saying.
Seeing that Anderson Hood hadn't responded again, Lumian stood up and looked at Franca.
Franca was standing by the window in Luo Shan's apartment, silently gazing out.
Lumian walked over and stood beside her, looking out in the same direction.
He saw the food stalls on the street far below, people eating and drinking late into the night, and the high-rise apartments in the neighborhood, with lights still on in many rooms, dotting the night sky.
Lumian gazed quietly for a while before turning to look at Franca.
Franca was focused, her gaze seemingly reluctant to shift for even a second.
After a while, she sighed softly. "The night is truly beautiful..."

Chapter 1006: Speaking From Experience

Lumian looked at Franca, her eyes once again a lake-blue hue after her advancement, reflecting the bright or slightly yellow dots of light.

"Yes," he echoed with a sigh.

Franca fell silent again.

After a long while, she murmured as if in a dream, "Did you know? I can never go back..."

"What happened?" Lumian asked gently, following her lead.

Franca began recounting how she and Jenna had woken up in the basement of Mushu Hospital. It was as if she needed to build up the courage to tell the rest by retelling earlier events, prolonging the time to mentally prepare herself.

Lumian didn't rush her. He listened quietly, occasionally asking for details.

When Franca reached the part where she chose to force her advancement using the peculiarities of the dreamscape, to draw the Primordial Demoness's attention and open an escape route, Lumian raised an eyebrow.

Though he had already deduced Franca's advancement to Demoness of Despair through the Law of Beyonder Characteristics Convergence and his spiritual intuition as a Demoness, and had suspected from her earlier narrative that it was the best possible option under those circumstances, he still couldn't help but feel there was some design to it all: the conditions for her advancement to Demoness of Despair had come together perfectly at that moment!

Of course, if he had been present, he would've simply burned a corpse-oil candle and connected with the terrifying will in that peculiar city, forcibly destroying all obstacles.

After describing how she fell into the illusory abyss with the collapse of the mirror world and the final part of the corridor, Franca paused for a few seconds before continuing in a calm, straightforward tone about how she slowed her descent, how she felt her mind and spirit being pulled toward the abyss, and how she chose the gray-white fog, sinking into it.

Her body began to tremble, but she pushed through, recounting the blurred door of light, the transparent "cocoons," the rapidly spinning illusory planet, the slightly solemn voice, and the version of herself within the "cocoon," along with the reasonable speculations that followed.

Lumian had long suspected that "transmigration" wasn't as simple as Franca and the others from the Curly-Haired Baboons Research

Society believed. He suspected there was a terrifying truth they couldn't accept. That was why, during their time in the dream city, he and Jenna had tacitly been kinder to Franca, expressing their care for her more clearly and directly. But he hadn't expected the truth to be this.

So it wasn't spatial transmigration—it was temporal transmigration... Traveling back and forth through space is possible, but can the flow of time be reversed? No, if that were possible, reviving Aurore wouldn't be so difficult... Lumian's emotions suddenly turned somber.

He felt as if he had lost several incredibly important people and objects he deeply missed forever. The sorrow, melancholy, regret, and pain were like sharp chisels engraving an epitaph on his soul.

At that moment, he understood that these were Aurore's feelings. Her soul fragment had resonated with Franca's story and intense emotions.

Home—forever out of reach.

"That's basically it. I suspect the Western Continent is where the Underworld Daoist and the Celestial Master reside. It's the world thousands, maybe tens of thousands, of years in the future from my homeland..." Franca's body was still trembling slightly.

Lumian closed his eyes for a moment, then deliberately chuckled and said, "I guess I'm pretty lucky. At least I still have hope of reviving Aurore, but you all don't even have that anymore."

Franca's mouth opened slightly, and she was momentarily stunned.

Infuriated, she burst into laughter. "Dammit! Do you Hunters ever say anything nice? How can a human mouth spew something so venomous!"

"I thought you'd send me flying with a kick," Lumian said, showing a deliberately punchable expression.

Franca suddenly understood his true intention and snorted. "I had the impulse. You'd make a great punching bag right now."

She paused, her gaze returning to the window. Looking out at the warm, tranquil night, she said,

"When you said earlier that, in the worst-case scenario, the mission would fail, they'd send in another team, or we'd all face the apocalypse together, but you couldn't let me die in Mushu Hospital's basement... I didn't completely agree with your thinking, but... I did feel like maybe my life had some meaning after all..."

"I said that on purpose, to make you feel needed and valued, to help pull you out of that dead, hopeless state." Lumian chuckled. "I didn't know exactly what you'd gone through, but I could tell how you were feeling."

Franca snapped her head toward Lumian and scoffed, "When dealing with a Hunter, you judge by his actions, not words. I know you really did send Luo Shan and Jenna to get Zhou Mingrui down to the basement."
Before Lumian could respond, Franca, now more curious than before, asked, "How did you get into that psychological trauma?"
That was near the bottom of the illusory abyss!
Smiling, Lumian replied, "When I reached B2, I ran into Lu Yong'an. She must be an external consciousness brought in by some method, unlike Grimm, who had been corrupted and influenced into becoming a dream manifestation."
"So when she saw me in Crimson Moon Hospital, she most likely realized I was a fake Child of God but still went along with my actions. Heh, maybe to the Great Mother, whether I'm the real Child of God or a fake, as long as I bear that title, I'll eventually become real, and this time was her chance."
"Lu Yong'an told me at the time that to save someone from the illusory abyss, I could only rely on the Mother's help."
"You didn't actually pray, did you?" Franca was suddenly filled with concern and worry, forgetting her earlier despair and emotional numbness.
Her gaze instinctively drifted to Lumian's abdomen.
"Of course not." Lumian had deliberately started with Lumian's story to stir Franca's emotions, preventing her from fully sinking into sadness.
As someone who had learned from long bouts of depression, he knew exactly what to say and do in such moments.
More importantly, he was also a Demoness of Despair, having gone through the experience of perfectly matching the acting method right after his advancement, digesting the part of the potion that made him "feel despair." He had also learned from the world's greatest Psychiatrist's report on how to stabilize his mental state and avoid losing control.
That was why he was comfortable telling Franca his true thoughts and feelings before he saved her. He intended to be her most solid anchor. After all, how many Hunters would openly reveal their innermost thoughts?
Franca let out an uncontrollable breath of relief. "Then how did you destroy the illusory abyss and open the path?"
Lumian chuckled. "Corpse wax candle."
As he spoke, he took out the bottle of semi-solid yellow-red wax and sighed.
"The Flame of Destruction burns too fiercely. This candle can only be used once more."

Franca, who had heard Lumian's story of the previous ritual with the corpse wax candle and knew that the target of the ritual was likely the terrifying will at the top of the Hunter and Witch pathways, widened her eyes in shock.
"You're a bit extreme..."
She didn't finish her thought, reminded that such extremity was for her sake.
Lumian recounted the sensations during the secret deed ritual, the terrifying will's partial descent, and the mutation of the Blood Emperor's remnant aura. He ended by saying,
"I couldn't enter the gray fog initially, but an exaggerated bolt of lightning just happened to strike it."
"That was..." Franca thought for a moment and said, "Madam Justice's incantation, delivered through some method. It sounded like a name, to be spoken in ancient Hermes."
She didn't dare speak the incantation, afraid that even without using Beyonder language, it might still call down lightning in the dream, though less terrifyingly.
"A name that could summon such lightning in Mr. Fool's dream?" Lumian pondered. "It must involve a true god or some great existence... Or it could be related to Mr. Fool's perception."
"Yes." Franca was more concerned with something else. "How do you feel now?"
Lumian raised his right hand, palm up, revealing a patch of pale skin and the dark, old red marks beneath it.
"The mutated Blood Emperor's aura and the Underworld Daoist's seal have fused slightly... I can't believe they can fuse...
"So far, there's been no external manifestation, no other changes..." After examining his own state, Lumian added, "Also, I feel like there's something more in me, but I can't detect it. It hasn't affected me... It's more like a side effect of the secret deed ritual, a lingering hallucination..."
"In the next couple of days, find a chance to leave the dream and have Madam Magician check it out," Franca reminded Lumian not to overlook this issue and to confirm it as soon as possible.
Lumian nodded and said, "In the meantime, go to the company and quit your job. You kept the position before to bait Zaratulstra out with the option to avoid danger by leaving the dream at critical moments. But now, you can't leave for the time being."
Only then did Franca remember her current state—before she fully digested the Despair potion, if she left the dream and returned to reality, she would lose control on the spot and turn into a monster.
"Right." She didn't argue, realizing she was still in deep trouble.
Then, she turned to leave the window.

"Not going to enjoy the night view anymore?" Lumian asked casually.
Franca pursed her lips and responded, "The more I look, the more I miss it, the harder it is to let go..."
She paused, then half-turned her body, casting her gaze out at the night once again.
After staring for a few seconds, she spoke, her voice soft and distant. "If I were Mr. Fool, I might wish to sleep forever, dreaming of this beautiful night, never waking..."

Chapter 1007: Important Information

Hearing Franca's words, Lumian felt a sense of resonance.

"If there hadn't been hidden dangers in that dream of Cordu Village, I wouldn't have wanted to wake up either..."

As he sighed, he suddenly paused, then said in a low voice, "No, I would force myself to wake up."

If he didn't wake up, he couldn't try to resurrect Aurore!

Franca silently withdrew her gaze and walked over to the long sofa in Luo Shan's home. She sat down, leaning back against the sofa as if she lacked the strength to support her body.

Lumian glanced over and followed, sitting down right next to Franca.

Franca turned her head to look at him but said nothing.

After about ten seconds, she stared at the turned-off TV across from her and murmured as if to herself,

"Back home, my favorite thing to do was to pick any channel and be on my phone while listening to the sound. My mom would scold me every time..."

Lumian didn't respond, just listening quietly.

Franca's expression gradually softened.

"My mom used to run a small restaurant, which later became a larger establishment. She was quick-tempered and efficient, and couldn't stand to see me being lazy. But you know, she'd just say a few words—in one ear and out the other, it didn't affect me at all. Later on, when business wasn't so good for a few years, she simply gave it up. Every day she'd play cards with her siblings and friends, eat here and drink there, and occasionally organize a trip. She couldn't have been more carefree or happy.

"My dad, my brother and I were also quite happy. We didn't have to be scolded or nagged. As my dad put it, we'd see each other once a day, take a walk together, chat about family matters before bed, and their marriage even improved.

"My dad was a mid-level manager at a big company. He'd been into electronics since early on, starting with radios and such, then tinkering with computers and getting into games. When I was little, I was always confused about why dad was always sitting in front of the computer. He said it was work, but he was always clicking on strange images. When I got a bit older, I fell in love with gaming too. I guess that's what they call leading by example.

"At first, my parents wanted another daughter, a little sister for me. They'd prepared for the fine and set up a room. Who knew they'd end up with another son? They couldn't bring themselves to abort, so they had him. Aren't second children supposed to be good

at reading the room, well-behaved, with high EQ because they have an older sibling keeping them in check? Why did that kid do everything backwards, looking down on everyone, thinking he was so cool and trendy, always causing trouble when he went out.
"When he was in elementary school, he got into a fight and got beaten up. He came crying to me, his big brother, for help. In the end, the other kid had cousins, and I ended up getting beaten up too.
"For a while after that, I was really into urban fantasy novels and modern wuxia stories. I fantasized about having martial arts skills or superpowers myself.
"I did alright in the college entrance exams and got into medical school. I got along well with my roommates. Everyone said I had a good personality, wasn't petty, was cheerful and optimistic, and generous with money.
"I guess I looked okay. I even had girls chase after me. But at the time I was busy playing games and going to comic conventions, so I didn't have the energy for dating. Of course, it was also because their looks and personalities weren't my type."
After rambling on like this, Franca paused and said, "Apart from worrying about having to do hard labor in the future, I had no regrets, nothing I wanted to change..."
Lumian turned his head to look at Franca and saw that as she leaned against the back of the sofa, her eyes were vacant, unfocused, with glistening tears silently sliding down her face.
Lumian didn't try to comfort Franca with words. He simply extended his left arm and quietly put it around her left shoulder, letting her lean against him.
Franca instinctively struggled for a moment, but quickly chose to give in.
Leaning against Lumian, she continued talking to herself, "I had originally planned to practice driving my mom's car during the holidays, find a chance to meet up with some online friends in Shanghai, and have fun for a week...
"I'd planned which games to buy recently, planned to visit my grandparents, planned to play games with my dad for two hours every day when I had time, to show him what real skill looks like...
"I'd even planned how to educate that little brat, planned to go to my mom's mahjong place for a few days to act like a filial son, serve tea and water, and accept tips..."
As she spoke, Franca's voice gradually lowered until it disappeared.
Lumian waited a few minutes before lowering his head to see that Franca had closed her eyes and fallen into a deep sleep, leaning

against him from his left shoulder to his left chest. Her legs had slid off the sofa at some point.
Lumian didn't move. He stared at the dark LCD TV screen, his thoughts gradually wandering.
After an unknown amount of time, Franca seemed to have a nightmare. Her eyes flew open and she suddenly straightened her back.
She looked left and right, finally coming to her senses and remembering what had happened last night.
Phew... She exhaled slowly and asked Lumian, "What time is it?"
"A little after 4 am, not quite 5 yet," Lumian calmly replied.
Franca made a sound of acknowledgment, then suddenly remembered something.
"Will Jenna and Luo Shan be okay alone in Room 2303?"
The current Jenna was purely a dream manifestation, while Luo Shan was being watched by unknown forces!
"I've been monitoring Room 2303 using mirrors," Lumian said calmly.
Only then did Franca relax.
She wriggled her shoulders, shaking off Lumian's arm, and sat up straight.
"Damn, I actually cried earlier, and you saw it... A real man shouldn't shed tears so easily!"
"Only because the saddest part hasn't come yet," Lumian replied.
Hearing this, both Franca and he fell silent.
"That's such a hurtful thing to say..." After a few seconds, Franca grumbled, "I can't believe you could respond so smoothly."
"After learning the truth about transmigration and resonating with your emotions, Aurore's soul fragment seems to have become a bit more active..." Lumian said with a hint of joy.
Franca bit her lip, unable to speak.
She then began rubbing her cheeks. "I can't continue in that state. We need to get down to business!"
"What business?" Lumian asked.
Franca thought for a few seconds and said, "According to what you said before, tonight's events seem to have been arranged, presumably pushed by Peng Deng's roommate Grisha behind the scenes.
"If this is true, what was their goal? It couldn't have been just to force me to advance in the dream and quickly find a way to digest the Despair potion, could it?
"Is it simply good people doing good deeds?"
Lumian understood that Franca was trying to distract herself from her inner sorrow and despair by focusing on important matters, so

he nodded cooperatively:
"From Luo Shan's feedback, Zhou Mingrui wasn't additionally affected by this incident either. He only confirmed that he has some special qualities and that there are major issues with the underground area of Mushu Hospital.
"The illusory abyss in the underground area of Mushu Hospital also hid itself in time, avoiding an encounter with Zhou Mingrui, and remained almost intact.
"Was the real purpose to have me use the corpse wax candle and complete a secret deed at the bottom of Mushu Hospital?
"And for us to find important intelligence through those psychological traumas in the underground area of Mushu Hospital?"
Franca nodded slowly.
"Yes, I can now almost confirm one thing:
"Mr. Fool is also a transmigrator, like me and Emperor Roselle."
As she spoke, Franca suddenly gave a self-mocking laugh.
"No, not a transmigrator, an ancient person."
"You mean those three empty 'cocoons' correspond to the three previous transmigrators?" Lumian understood what Franca was saying.
"Yes, Ancient Sun God, Emperor Roselle, and Mr. Fool," Franca elaborated. "Mr. Fool should have also progressed step by step from a mortal body to become a true god and then a great existence. Klein Moretti, Sherlock Moriarty, Gehrman Sparrow—these are probably not his incarnations, but different identities at different stages of his growth. These names all come from the entertainment works of our world, no, the ancient world. Utopia too.
"Well, the identity of Gehrman Sparrow became the Angel of Redemption, with people believing in and worshiping him, perhaps making him quite different from the other identities."
Lumian mused aloud, "So Zhou Mingrui is Mr. Fool's real name, his identity before transmigration?"
"It should be so," Franca shared her speculation. "That's why Zhou Mingrui is the core of the dream, the subconscious self-image of Mr. Fool. All important dream images are distributed around him, while identities like Sherlock Moriarty are scattered throughout the dream city, lacking special significance.
"The only one among them that's different is Gehrman Sparrow, who is widely believed in. The dream city originally didn't have such a manifestation, not even a story. It was entirely created out of thin air by Madam Magician, Madam Justice, and the others, becoming a classic character."

"This also indicates that The World Gehrman Sparrow might indeed have special symbolism or significance."
Lumian pondered for a moment and said, "The identity of Klein Moretti is also very special. It doesn't exist in the dream city either."
Franca tried to put herself in that position and said slowly, "The personal relationships corresponding to Klein Moretti do exist in the dream city, but they point to Zhou Mingrui.
"Klein Moretti was Mr. Fool's first identity after transmigration, gaining his recognition. Did their self-perceptions merge?
"So, Zhou Mingrui is also Klein Moretti, and Klein Moretti is equally Zhou Mingrui, indistinguishable from each other."
"That explanation does make sense," Lumian agreed with Franca's guess.
At this moment, Franca suddenly furrowed her brow.
"Bring out that whiteboard, the one with photos of important figures in the dream city and observation results."
Without asking why, Lumian took out the whiteboard made of frost and placed it opposite the coffee table.
Franca stared at the photos, sketches, introductions, and observation results on the whiteboard, her eyes constantly moving left and right.
After a while, she spoke in a grave tone, "If Mr. Fool is indeed a transmigrator, these dream manifestations hide a big problem."
Without waiting for Lumian to respond, Franca explained, "Except for Peng Deng and Zhang Yujia, the childhood friend who only sent back postcards, all the important dream manifestations here have nothing to do with 'Zhou Mingrui.'
"They all come from Klein Moretti, from Sherlock Moriarty, from Gehrman Sparrow and Mr. Fool's other identities, from the current world. Not a single one originates from before the transmigration, not one is an ancient person!
"Why is that?"

Chapter 1008: Dawn

Lumian easily understood Franca's meaning: the dream city itself was constructed based on Zhou Mingrui's memories from before his transmigration, but none of the relatively important dream manifestations close to Zhou Mingrui came from before the transmigration. They all originated from Zhou Mingrui's experiences after transmigrating, except for Peng Deng and Zhang Yujia.

This was clearly problematic!

"We previously thought Mr. Fool was a resurrected great existence not belonging to this era. Well... he truly doesn't belong to this era. Mr. Fool was really honest..." Franca suddenly understood the true meaning of a certain phrase in Mr. Fool's honorific name.

After adjusting her mindset, she continued, "From our previous understanding, it was very reasonable that there are no dream manifestations related to the identity of Zhou Mingrui. As a former great existence, he should have been involved with great existences and fallen ancient gods. These were all restricted and couldn't truly get close to Zhou Mingrui. Weren't we wondering before who Peng Deng really was, and who he corresponded to in reality? We never considered that he might actually be Zhou Mingrui's childhood friend.

"But if Zhou Mingrui is a transmigrator like me, and gradually became a great existence, that's truly remarkable. To transcend to becoming a deity with a mortal body and dominate the spirit world..."

At this point, Franca's emotional wound was once again torn open, with splinters piercing into it.

She thought about how even someone like Mr. Fool was shocked, saddened, pained and despairing when he learned the truth about transmigration. Even becoming a great existence couldn't allow him to return home. And after he fell asleep, these things even formed strong psychological traumas.

If even Mr. Fool was like this, what about her? *What about them?*

Lumian could guess what Franca was thinking now, why she paused, because he had similar associations and the same emotions were stirring deep in his heart.

After a moment of silence, Franca collected herself and continued, "If Zhou Mingrui is a transmigrator and was an ordinary person before, then where are his parents, relatives, classmates, friends, and close online friends?"

Lumian looked at the ice board covered with photos, sketches and notes, and said thoughtfully,

"In the dream, Zhou Mingrui has parents, but they're not in Yangdu. They live in a hometown that only exists in descriptions. Zhou Mingrui hardly contacts them, only conveying his greetings through Benson Zhou. Moreover, the setup of the dream parents clearly comes from Klein Moretti's parents.
"Similarly, the real-world prototypes for brother Benson Zhou and sister Zhou Sasa are Klein Moretti's brother Benson Moretti and sister Melissa Moretti.
"Among other relatives, friends, classmates, and online friends, perhaps only Peng Deng and Zhang Yujia are truly Zhou Mingrui's childhood friends."
Zhang Yujia was a mutual middle school and high school classmate of Zhou Mingrui and Peng Deng, and currently also worked in Yangdu.
She came from a well-off family and often traveled. She was currently on a so-called European trip. In the memories of the Major Arcana card holders, Zhang Yujia had never truly appeared. If not for her often sending postcards to Zhou Mingrui and Peng Deng, and occasionally chatting online, she could have been treated as a background figure like Zhou Mingrui's parents.
Franca concurred succinctly, "Now there are two issues:
"First, why have Zhou Mingrui's true relationships disappeared? Did Mr. Fool deliberately hide them himself, or did the Celestial Worthy tamper with them? If it's the former, why would Mr. Fool want to hide them? Is this a key point? If it's the latter, does this represent that the Celestial Worthy fears something?
"Second, given that other figures related to Zhou Mingrui haven't appeared in the dream city, the existence of Peng Deng and Zhang Yujia is even more suspicious. Adding to that, we previously saw Peng Deng's roommate Grisha appear at the emergency center. I think we need to shift our focus towards Peng Deng for now."
Lumian put himself in Mr. Fool's position and thought for a while.
"If I were Mr. Fool, and this dream city was the battlefield of my consciousness against the Celestial Worthy, my subconscious wouldn't want my real parents, relatives, classmates, and friends to be involved, even if they were just false dream manifestations, just my memories."
"Given the logic that Zhou Mingrui and Klein Moretti's cognitions have merged, the dream manifestations corresponding to Benson and Melissa shouldn't appear either," Franca joined the brainstorming session.
Lumian smiled. "Who says they were woven by Mr. Fool's subconscious?
"What if the Celestial Worthy deliberately created them?"

"The Celestial Worthy knows Mr. Fool's experiences after transmigration, but has no way to investigate his relationships before transmigration?" Franca had a new guess based on Lumian's rhetorical question. "So, the dream manifestations corresponding to Benson, Melissa, and Danitz had to appear, but some were arranged outside the dream city, and some only have a very shallow relationship with Zhou Mingrui. Is this a subconscious protection of these dream manifestations, an external result of Mr. Fool's consciousness fighting against the Celestial Worthy?"

Lumian nodded. "If the Celestial Worthy isn't really clear about Mr. Fool's relationships before transmigration, doesn't that suggest He hasn't eroded and corrupted Mr. Fool's core consciousness yet?"

"Mm." Franca suddenly had a flash of insight. "I understand now why Siatas became Zhou Mingrui's roommate."

She stood up, walked to an area near the window, and paced back and forth a few steps.

"We previously suspected that the elves were former transmigrators. Now it seems they're more like descendants of the Western Continent bloodline who survived on the Northern and Southern Continents and the Five Seas.

"For Mr. Fool, these are the descendants of his fellow countrymen, so the relationship is very close, so he places them very near him.

"Similarly, the Intis Group where Zhou Mingrui works was founded by the transmigrator, Emperor Roselle, and the boss of the neighboring company is the heir of another transmigrator, the Ancient Sun God. These dream manifestations are all very close to Zhou Mingrui."

The more Franca spoke, the more she believed her interpretation of these symbols was correct.

She shifted her thoughts. "We've cross-checked within our Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society. The time we transmigrated to the current world was 1352, seven years ago. And according to the information provided by the Major Arcana card holders, Mr. Fool also fell asleep in 1352.

"Before Mr. Fool entered his slumber and confronted the Celestial Worthy, did he release all of us from the 'cocoons'?"

"It should be so." Lumian felt Franca's reasoning was sound.

He also stood up and said thoughtfully, "We'll leave the matter of contacting Peng Deng to Anthony. He can make more aggressive probes now.

"If we can figure out Peng Deng's true identity and the meaning of his existence, perhaps we can find a way to weaken the Celestial Worthy and awaken Mr. Fool."

At this point, Lumian paused, his eyes narrowing slightly.
"If there are no major errors in what we just discussed, then Zhou Sasa coming to Yangdu for university probably has strong symbolic meaning, and not a good one for Mr. Fool."
Logically, Zhou Sasa should be outside the dream city, not involved in this "battlefield".
Franca was suddenly alarmed. "When is Zhou Sasa arriving?"
"Wednesday," Lumian answered in a low voice. "It's already Monday now."
Franca hissed and said, "Before Zhou Sasa arrives in Yangdu, there must be substantial progress on both Peng Deng's side and An Xiaotian's side!"
Lumian nodded and said, "Yeah."
The two discussed this matter for a long time.
"You should actively leave the dream and return to reality in the morning to inquire about more detailed intelligence from the Ancient Sun God and that individual from the Aurora Order. Since Grisha appeared at the arranged scene, and Anthony was scared by hallucinations and actively left the dream after contacting Peng Deng, I suspect Peng Deng and his roommate are related to the Ancient Sun God. We lack sufficient intelligence to accurately judge this point. Also, don't forget to have Madam Magician check your physical condition," Franca finally instructed Lumian.
With a grin, Lumian replied, "I'm only worried that the Major Arcana card holders don't know enough, or that some intelligence is currently inaccessible to us.
"Afterwards, you should move to the background and switch positions with Anthony. Let him do the probing, and you shouldn't appear."
"Alright," Franca answered, finally leaving the state of focused discussion.
She noticed that the window area had brightened at some point. Outside the glass, the morning sunlight fell, carrying a hint of golden yellow, clarifying the entire sky and tinting the green leaves of the trees.
Birds chirped as they flew by, and occasional human voices could be heard, relaxed and soothing.
Morning had arrived.
The sun had risen.
Daylight had come.
Franca stared at this morning scene, almost silently murmuring to herself, "It's beautiful."
Sunlight penetrated through the glass, shining on her and Lumian, as if a great existence was gently comforting their hearts.

...
After Lumian returned to Xinhong District to tell Anthony about probing Peng Deng, Franca took the elevator to the 23rd floor and entered the apartment she and Jenna were renting.
As soon as she opened the door, she saw that Jenna was already awake and busy getting herself ready.
"So early?" Franca blurted out.
"It's not early. I need to carefully do my makeup. I have to walk around the company today. Who knows, I might be spotted by some film crew," Dreamscape Jenna said without turning her head.
Oh right, it's Monday, Jenna has to go to the Hall Film Company... But she's a dream manifestation now, will there be any slip-ups? Franca couldn't help but worry a little.
At this moment, Dreamscape Jenna went into the bathroom, and Luo Shan walked out of the bedroom, still sleepy-eyed.
Seeing Luo Fu, she greeted, "Nothing happened, right?"
She thought Luo Fu and Lumina stayed overnight at her place to personally confirm if there were any hidden dangers.
"Everything's normal, for now," Franca said, half reassuring and half stating facts.
She then told Luo Shan, "I'm going to resign."
"Huh?" Luo Shan was stunned.
Franca showed a gentle smile.
"I have to move to the background now, because if I get kicked out of the dream now, I'll truly die."
Luo Shan suddenly remembered the conversation between Luo Fu and Jian Na she had overheard last night. Some words she couldn't understand at the time now finally made sense.
She suddenly felt that she was no longer alone, and returned the smile.
"It's about the same for me."
Without the dreamscape, I would disappear too.

Chapter 1009: Boon

At Xinhong District, in the rented apartment.

After telling Anthony the results of his discussion with Franca, and instructing him to hand Ludwig over to Franca before probing Peng Deng, Lumian lay down on the bed.

He closed his eyes, entered a Cogitative state, and outlined his own phantom image in his mind.

Then, he imagined himself leaping from an extremely high place, rapidly falling in free fall.

In this state, he heard the whistling of wind in his ears.

But he didn't immediately leave the dream. He vaguely heard humans conversing in the wind, with words coming from different directions.

At this moment, Lumian seemed to return to Cordu Village, back to a warm summer afternoon. At that time, he was lying drowsily atop a haystack, with old women gathered nearby, picking lice off each other while gossiping about various rumors in the village. Children occasionally ran back and forth around them, farmers returned to the village early from their work, and members of the padre's family passed by grumbling...

Lumian opened his eyes, his nose still seeming to smell the scent of grass mixed with sheep dung.

He let out a breath, then rolled out of bed, walked out of the room, and came downstairs to the luxurious villa.

Madam Justice, Madam Magician, and Madam Judgment were all in the living room.

"Important intelligence?" Madam Justice understood that Lumian wouldn't actively exit the dream unless it was something very crucial.

And she hadn't noticed that the current real dream had a strong rejection towards Lumian, which meant Lumian wasn't kicked out of the dream.

"Yes." Lumian sat down on a single sofa, "It starts with a psychological trauma Franca saw in the underground area of Mushu Hospital."

Madam Justice looked at Lumian for a few seconds. "First, tell us how you rescued Two of Cups. Seven of Cups was kicked out of the dream too early and doesn't know much."

Smiling, Lumian replied, "I used the corpse wax candle."

"You completed a secret deed ritual and received feedback?" Madam Magician had already roughly guessed what had happened from the changes in Lumian's real body state and the stress response that appeared in Fourth Epoch Trier. Now she was

just confirming.
Lumian verbally described what he saw, heard, and felt during the covenant ritual, and finally said, "The remnant aura of the Blood Emperor underwent a rather obvious change, and it fused a bit with the Underworld Daoist's seal. It seems like I've gained something extra, but I can't detect it."
As he spoke, he displayed the old blood spots hidden under the pale skin of his palm.
Madam Magician nodded slightly, countless dazzling starbursts lighting up and slowly rotating in the depths of her eyes.
After twenty or thirty seconds, she said with a hint of amusement, "I don't know whether to say you're lucky or unlucky.
"That terrifying will not only gazed upon you but also bestowed power upon you.
"But due to the lack of necessary rituals and the existence of the Underworld Daoist's seal, that power fused with the remnant aura of the Blood Emperor and is under seal, unable to be utilized. Otherwise, you'd already be a gifted War Bishop or something else by now.
"Although this power is sealed, it has still brought some effects to you. For example, the soul fragments of the Cordu villagers under my seal have undergone some mutations, preparing to become your 'soldiers'."
"No wonder I vaguely heard everyone's 'conversations' when I was leaving the dream just now..." Lumian suddenly realized.
So what he had gained was a new power.
Madam Magician continued, "Whether there are any hidden dangers in that power itself, I can't tell at the moment, but after it fused with the remnant aura of the Blood Emperor, there are certainly hidden dangers, and it has become more active."
At this point, Madam Magician paused. "Combined with the Omebella bloodline in your body, if not for the Underworld Daoist's seal, I'd suspect you might become pregnant in response, unable to abort, giving birth to a deeply corrupted, mutated version of Alista Tudor."
"Wouldn't that make the Blood Emperor have to call me daddy?" Lumian, in his Demoness of Despair state, laughed.
"It would be mommy," Madam Magician corrected.
Lumian didn't continue this topic, instead turning to talk about how he entered the vortex, how he took advantage of the lightning strike to open a channel and rescue Franca.
"It seems our efforts were not in vain." Madam Justice showed a gratified smile.
"Which deity does that incantation involve?" Lumian asked.

Madam Justice made an "mm" sound and said, "The Lord of Storms, that's His true name. Don't casually recite it. Lightning damage is area-of-effect and indiscriminate. Moreover, Mr. Fool's avatars have triggered lightning strikes with this before. The subconscious perception is that the lightning brought by this incantation is very terrifying and highly destructive."
Using a deity's true name as an incantation? How is Mr. Fool's incarnation even more like a Provoker than me? Lumian nodded slightly.
He was silent for two seconds before saying, "At that time, I was prepared for the possibility that I might collapse out of control due to the secret deed ritual, or even die. I had only one thought, which was to open the abyssal channel as quickly as possible, or destroy that illusory abyss.
"This might not have been enough, so I asked Jenna and Luo Shan to invite Zhou Mingrui, who was at Mushu Hospital's emergency center, to come down to the underground area and take a look. I didn't know if this would bring good results or bad changes, or how high the probability of fixing it would be if problems arose, but none of that was the most important thing at the moment."
As he spoke, Lumian in his Demoness of Despair state slightly raised his chin.
Madam Justice, Madam Magician, and Madam Judgment all fell silent.
Lumian displayed a bright smile and continued, "If that would truly bring destructive results, and you monitored it, you could kill my body in the real world in advance to prevent all this.
"It would be good to die. If I died, I wouldn't know anything, wouldn't have to care about anything."
After exchanging glances for a few seconds, Madam Justice, Madam Magician, and Madam Judgment sighed and showed warm smiles that calmed one's emotions.
"I don't agree with this style of yours, but I'm glad to see you have your own thoughts and choices."
Madam Magician also sighed and said, "If you encounter similar situations in the future, you can try reciting my honorific name. The power sealing those soul fragments in you comes from me. I can use them as a medium and, through the connection created by the honorific name, exert some influence, but success is not guaranteed.
"Also, if you're willing to pay the price of being permanently kicked out and unable to re-enter the dream city to escape a predicament, I can give you better incantations."
Lumian's straightened back relaxed a bit, and his chin was no

longer slightly raised.
Curious, he inquired, "What incantation?"
"Chief Yagates's honorific name," Madam Magician smiled, "Reciting this outside the dream would have no effect, and might even unknowingly turn the reciter into a marionette of the Celestial Worthy. But reciting it in the dream can attract attention and open any channel. However, similarly, Chief Yagates is essentially a manifestation created by the fusion of Mr. Door's remnant spirit and the dream's subconscious, with special symbolism. His actions might be influenced by the Celestial Worthy, but relatively speaking, compared to reciting Mr. Fool's honorific name, this receives less interference."
"So it can be done like this..." Lumian said thoughtfully, "Were we perhaps following the surface rules of the dream city too strictly before? Always trying to play the role of citizens with Beyonder powers... Remember, you're just acting; it's essentially a dream..."
Madam Magician smiled and said, "We've thought about this issue too. The method of reciting the Chief's honorific name was my idea. But before finding exploitable rule loopholes, you'd better not casually break the rules. Otherwise, hehe, there are too many painful lessons from before. I won't list them one by one."
Lumian nodded, adjusted his state, and detailed the scene Franca saw in that psychological trauma at the bottom of the illusory abyss, the deductions she made, and the problems she discovered.
Finally, he said, "It was only after Franca realized that Mr. Fool was a transmigrator that she found she had previously overlooked names like Sherlock Moriarty and Merlin Hermes. Logically, she should have immediately deduced from these that Mr. Fool, like her, was also a transmigrator, though she would have guessed he came from another world.
"In the dream city, many of our ideas seem to have been restricted. We unconsciously overlooked certain things, like An Xiaotian's problem, like the evidence that Mr. Fool was a transmigrator. This might be the Celestial Worthy's will at work, creating a Fooling effect.
"And what He deliberately made us overlook and avoid, most likely hides the correct direction."
Madam Justice listened intently, her expression first showing a bit of bewilderment and surprise, but quickly revealing relief and emotion.
Madam Magician and Madam Judgment had similar reactions.
After Lumian finished speaking, Madam Justice's emerald eyes flickered as she recalled,
"You don't know under what kind of situation and in what way we

first saw Mr. Fool, and what kind of performance he showed subsequently. So you certainly can't understand why we didn't think in the direction that Mr. Fool might be a transmigrator, an ordinary person who grew in strength a step at a time..."
"It was only after the Cordu Village disaster that I vaguely felt this possibility," Madam Magician added.
Madam Justice's expression became very gentle, with more smiles on her face.
"To have done so many things with a mortal body, to have reached this level, to use true human nature to confront the Celestial Worthy, I-I admire Mr. Fool even more, um, and also feel more sympathetic..."
Curious, Lumian inquired, "What things has Mr. Fool done?"
In his view, Mr. Fool now seemed closer. This great existence was once human, and was even a "fellow countryman" with Aurore.
And Lumian only knew about things related to Gehrman Sparrow and what was told in the Bible.
"We can tell you about it properly, but now let's first discuss the key issues you've discovered," Madam Justice said with a smile.

Chapter 1010: Interpreting Symbols

Lumian organized his thoughts and explained about the manifestations possibly being an identity, "Zhou Mingrui's" identity lacking corresponding interpersonal relationships, Peng Deng and Zhang Yujia's existence seeming more special, and Peng Deng's roommate Grisha appearing in the emergency center of Mushu Hospital.

"From a transmigrator's perspective, there are indeed problems with the corresponding details. Zhou Mingrui seems to be just a name, while the person who shares an apartment with Siatas and others, works at the Intis Group, and has a brother named Benson and a sister named Sasa is more like Klein Moretti." Madam Justice nodded slowly. "Except for the dream city itself and Peng Deng and Zhang Yujia, no other important figures originate from the First Epoch or before."

She temporarily treated the super-ancient era mentioned by Two of Cups as history from the First Epoch or before.

So far, the Tarot Club had almost no understanding of events before the Second Epoch.

As she spoke, Madam Justice fell silent, seeming lost in thought.

Madam Magician glanced at her and said to Lumian, "Since Peng Deng and Grisha may involve the Ancient Sun God, let me first tell you the relevant information we know, of course, limited to the part you can access."

At this moment, Jenna sensed the activity in the living room and came down from the second floor.

She looked around, quietly found a place to sit down, and joined Lumian in listening to Madam Magician talk about matters related to the Ancient Sun God.

Madam Magician considered for a moment and said, "I've told you before that the source of all supernatural powers can be traced back to the original Creator."

Lumian and Jenna nodded simultaneously.

Madam Magician continued, "The original Creator created this world, and at some point disintegrated Himself, splitting into the Beyonder characteristics of different pathways. Well, it may have been the terrifying impact of His self-disintegration that completely destroyed the super-ancient civilization where Mr. Fool and Two of Cups lived, with only some humans surviving, ushering in the First Epoch, what we call the Chaos Epoch."

"Was the Celestial Worthy born at that time? Mr. Fool and Franca should have been suspended above that light door before the collapse of the super-ancient civilization," Lumian said words that

Jenna currently couldn't understand the specific meaning of.
Madam Magician pondered for a few seconds and said, "Based on the knowledge we currently possess, the final Creator simultaneously had tendencies towards separation and convergence. Before He completely disintegrated, there should have already been a split in His personality, or rather, His divine nature. The Celestial Worthy may belong to one of the divine natures that split off, so the Celestial Worthy's spiritual imprint, like that of the original Creator, cannot be erased and will always exist within the corresponding Beyonder characteristics."
Jenna understood this part and blurted out, "Then doesn't that mean Mr. Fool can never truly defeat the Celestial Worthy?"
"He can only both merge and oppose, gaining some advantage over the long course of time," Madam Magician said with a bitter smile. "There's a saying in the dream city that makes a lot of sense: In the long run, we all die."
Lumian, Jenna, and the others fell silent.
Madam Magician composed herself and said, "Other divine natures also split off at that time, one of which you can call God Almighty.
"The history of the First Epoch might be the history of God Almighty opposing the Celestial Worthy. This is our only understanding of that period of history, and we can't guarantee its accuracy. Anyway, at the end of the First Epoch, something unknown happened, and both fell simultaneously. The Beyonder characteristics split more thoroughly, and the first Blasphemy Slate was left behind in some secret place."
The first Blasphemy Slate that recorded the twenty-two paths of the divine.
"Did God Almighty occupy the pathways of Spectator and Secrets Suppliant?" Lumian roughly understood what Madam Magician wanted to say.
Madam Magician nodded and said, "The five pathways of Spectator, Secrets Suppliant, Reader, Sailor, and Bard, symbolizing omniscience and omnipotence."
"Five pathways..." It wasn't Lumian or Jenna who marveled, but Madam Justice.
Of course, Lumian and Jenna were also shocked—the Celestial Worthy and Mr. Fool only occupied three pathways!
"The number of pathways isn't the key to how powerful these great existences are," Madam Magician briefly explained without going into detail. "The Ancient Sun God became a deity based on the Bard pathway, collecting the Uniqueness and the minimum required Sequence 1 Beyonder characteristics of the corresponding

pathways. Later, He was betrayed and fell, splitting apart. But various signs indicate that before His fall, He had actually encountered what Mr. Fool experienced—God Almighty had revived within Him.
"After the Ancient Sun God fell, His legacy was divided into five parts. One part He had pre-divided to the Angel of Imagination, another part nurtured the True Creator and the second Blasphemy Slate on His remains, and the remaining three parts were divided among the three Kings of Angels at the time."
Madam Magician didn't say what happened to those three Kings of Angels later, but Lumian and Jenna vaguely guessed something.
"A few years ago, that Angel of Imagination became a god and obtained, well, I don't know if it was the second or first Blasphemy Slate. Anyway, He used it to go to the Forsaken Land of the Gods and merge with the True Creator.
"That's roughly how things are. I can't guarantee the accuracy of the specific details," Madam Magician finally said.
As soon as she finished speaking, Madam Justice emerged from her contemplation and looked at Lumian and Jenna, saying, "I have a guess about the identities and symbolism of Peng Deng, Grisha, and Zhang Yujia."
...
In the dream city, inside a coffee shop.
After handing Ludwig over to Franca, Anthony used the pretext of continuing their previous consultation to arrange a meeting with Peng Deng.
He was prepared to rent an unfurnished apartment and pay a renovation deposit. After all, Zhou Shasha would arrive in Yang City the day after tomorrow, and they might not even have a chance to spend the remaining money they had!
Seeing Peng Deng put down his black laptop backpack and sit across from him, Anthony smiled and greeted him, "I have a friend who knows Zhou Mingrui. I heard you're Zhou Mingrui's childhood friend?"
Anthony wasn't worried that this statement would trigger too obvious a change, as it was a common negotiation tactic—drawing closer to get a better price.
After placing his phone to his right, Peng Deng raised his head.
A smile appeared on his unremarkable face. "Yes, I'm not only Zhou Mingrui's childhood friend, I'm also other people's childhood friend."
Childhood friend of others... *Why specifically emphasize this?* Whose childhood friend is he besides? Anthony's mind suddenly tensed.

...
Trier, inside a luxurious villa.
Madam Justice stood up and used her right hand to draw a semi-transparent, dreamlike wooden board.
"Peng Deng once made Four of Swords have hallucinations due to his own fear, causing him to actively leave the dream," Madam Justice said while making Peng Deng's photo and this sentence materialize virtually and stick to the wooden board.
Next, she outlined Grisha's portrait.
"This is Peng Deng's roommate, who appeared in the emergency center of Mushu Hospital last night.
"This is Nie Zhen, Peng Deng's girlfriend."
After adding Nie Zhen's illusory photo, Madam Justice paused and said, "This is the boss of Aurora Company, and Aurora Company corresponds to the Aurora Order in reality. Their boss most likely symbolizes that True Creator, closely related to the Ancient Sun God."
As she spoke, Madam Justice also pasted the photo of the half-naked body of Aurora Company's boss onto the dreamlike wooden board.
After two seconds, Madam Justice continued in a slow voice, "Zhang Yujia once sent Zhou Mingrui a postcard with an image of Sedlec Ossuary.
"For a long time, the Sedlec Ossuary was the iconic possession of the Angel of Imagination."
After Zhang Yujia's file photo was also pasted onto the illusory wooden board, Madam Justice smiled and said, "When the Spectator pathway reaches the sequence of Dreamweaver, one can split off past identities or personalities, turning them into seemingly real people who can sleep normally, eat normally, socialize normally, and work normally.
"Now, there are a total of five people listed on the blackboard, and there are five pathways related to omniscience and omnipotence..."
Before Madam Justice could state her conclusion, Anthony suddenly came down from upstairs.
Seeing Madam Magician, Lumian, and the others, he explained, "After interacting with Peng Deng today, I was kicked out of the dream. This time it wasn't because of fear.
"However, I gleaned some information from Peng Deng's hints."
Seeing everyone's eyes turn to him, Anthony paused, then said solemnly, "Peng Deng is not only Zhou Mingrui's childhood friend, he's likely also the Celestial Worthy's childhood friend!"
Hearing this, Madam Justice's lips curved slightly, revealing a

smile.
She pointed at the illusory photos on the semi-transparent blackboard and said, "It's the same for Peng Deng, and the same for Zhang Yujia.
"Peng Deng's girlfriend Nie Zhen and his roommate Grisha, as well as the boss of Aurora Company whose origin is easiest to discern, all point to the same symbolism."
"The Celestial Worthy's childhood friend is God Almighty?" Lumian roughly understood what Peng Deng specifically symbolized.
And this symbolism, influenced by the characteristics of the Spectator pathway, had undergone a split, not just in Peng Deng, but in the other four people as well.
"One of the people who least wants the Celestial Worthy to resurrect might be that God Almighty, which is why He specifically arranged to guide you to discover the corresponding psychological trauma in the underground area of Mushu Hospital," Madam Magician said in a tone of sudden realization.
Madam Justice thought for a moment and said in a lowered voice, "If the one currently worshiped by the Aurora Order enters the dream, He should be able to choose one of these five forms as His body. It could be Peng Deng, it could be Nie Zhen, it could be Grisha, it could be Zhang Yujia, or it could be the boss of Aurora Company."
Madam Magician suddenly had a new idea.
"Peng Deng and Grisha are roommates, and Nie Zhen is about to move in with them. Does this symbolize that the trinity is merging?
"Does moving out represent separation and opposition?"

Chapter 1011: Re-entering the Dreamscape

No one could answer Madam Magician's question, as it involved matters at too high a level and they lacked sufficient background information.

Lumian used this as a basis for his thoughts and said contemplatively,

"If the symbolic meaning of being roommates and moving out is really this, can we assume that one of Peng Deng, Grisha, and Nie Zhen is the one currently worshiped by the Aurora Order? If He has entered the dream city."

This was because the one currently worshiped by the Aurora Order was already the result of the merged consciousness of the Visionary and the True Creator, and He seemed to want to merge with even more.

"We can preliminarily assume so, but He might randomly use one of the three forms of Peng Deng, Grisha, and Nie Zhen," Madam Justice confirmed Lumian's guess.

Lumian mused aloud. "The first time we observed Peng Deng, the car broke down, and we happened to meet that person from the Church of Steam nearby, who quickly helped us repair it. We also took the opportunity to establish a connection with Him.

"Was this a coincidence manufactured by Peng Deng? Did he want us to get help from that individual from the Church of Steam?"

Lumian didn't directly mention Stiano. It was fine to say it in the dream city—after all, they were WeChat friends now. But in the real world, even an incomplete divine name could potentially bring terrifying consequences.

"It should be." Madam Justice pondered for a few seconds.

At this point, Jenna, who had roughly understood the situation, raised a question, "Did God Almighty arrange for Franca and me to suddenly enter the underground area of Mushu Hospital in order to let us grasp important intelligence, discover previously overlooked key details, and thus interpret the remaining symbols, finding the correct direction to weaken the Celestial Worthy and awaken Mr. Fool?

"Is Franca becoming a Demoness of Despair and quickly digesting half of the potion an advance payment?

"But this contradicts the motives of the one currently worshiped by the Aurora Order. We previously speculated that He would prefer to maintain a balanced situation until He achieves His goals in the real world, only then allowing Mr. Fool to wake up, to avoid Mr. Fool interfering with His plans."

In a brief silence, Lumian turned to Anthony. "Tell us in detail

about how you were kicked out of the dream."
Anthony recalled and said, "After Peng Deng hinted that he was also the childhood friend of others, we didn't delve into the details of this aspect. We simply talked about the renovation, agreed to find a time to view the house in person, sign the contract, and then left the cafe separately.
"As soon as I was out of Peng Deng's sight, I felt like I was being kicked out of the dream and rapidly turning into a marionette. I 'calmed' myself, eliminating the fear, but still couldn't shake off that state. I could only stop resisting and leave the dream."
Madam Justice's eyes moved slightly as she said, "In other words, Peng Deng is being closely watched by the dream subconscious.
"If he is truly one of God Almighty's corresponding dream forms, he would indeed be treated this way. Only He is worthy of such treatment by the dream subconscious.
"So, Peng Deng doesn't meet Zhou Mingrui at night, nor has he made any other attempts. Under such close monitoring, he simply can't.
"There's also a reasonable explanation for his renting of the magic mirror. The birth of that magic mirror is suspected to be related to God Almighty.
"Similarly, there's now enough reason for why the Star Dream Provisions Store was willing to rent the mirror to him.
"Hmm..."
Madam Justice looked at Anthony. "The first time you contacted Peng Deng, you had hallucinations due to fear and actively left the dream. This might have been intentionally done by Peng Deng. His purpose was to remind you to be careful when interacting with him, to be as cautious as when interacting with Zhou Mingrui."
Having inferred this far, Madam Justice nodded lightly. "This time, he actively hinted to you that he's also the Celestial Worthy's childhood friend, which seems unusual."
Madam Magician and Madam Justice exchanged glances before saying, "Combining this with the events in the underground area of Mushu Hospital, can we assume that the one currently worshiped by the Aurora Order hopes that Mr. Fool will gain the upper hand soon and gradually wake up with our help?"
"It could also be the tendency of God Almighty's spiritual imprint, which the one worshiped by the Aurora Order can't suppress," Madam Justice offered a possibility.
Lumian thought for a moment and showed a slight smile.
"Another possibility is that the one worshiped by the Aurora Order foresaw a major change in the dream city, a change favorable to the Celestial Worthy, so He arranged for Franca to enter the

underground area of Mushu Hospital in advance, to come into contact with that psychological trauma, as a hedge.
"It's also possible that some problems have arisen in the real world, such as hidden dangers left by the last vortex incident, forcing the one worshiped by the Aurora Order to start the plan to weaken the Celestial Worthy and awaken Mr. Fool ahead of schedule. Haha, is the sky about to fall, urgently needing tall people to prop it up?"
"Hidden dangers..." Madam Magician seemed to have guessed something.
She said to Lumian, "Regardless of which possibility it is, things seem to have become urgent.
"From the key information that Mr. Fool is a transmigrator, we can deduce the issues with Peng Deng, Zhang Yujia, and others, and the special nature of the identity of Gehrman Sparrow. The former currently seems like allies, while for the latter, the temporary breakthrough point is only An Xiaotian."
Madam Magician looked at Madam Justice and Madam Judgment, then said through gritted teeth, "We allow you to use Li Keji's mushroom to treat An Xiaotian."
Lumian offered a curt acknowledgment. "Okay."
Jenna nodded along, then raised a new question, "But the voice Luo Shan heard in her dream was The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings, and the power that teleported us to the underground area of Mushu Hospital doesn't seem like His."
Lumian chuckled. "I've already guessed who did it."
"Who?" Jenna was quite surprised.
He had already guessed?
Lumian chuckled and said, "Mr. Huang Tao."
He immediately added,
"More accurately, the mirrored Emperor Roselle."
Madam Justice and the other Major Arcana card holders nodded slightly.
Lumian continued to explain to Jenna, "The mirrored Emperor Roselle has a cooperative relationship with Zaratulstra, so after entering the dream city, he tried to occupy the identity of Mr. Huang. At the same time, Zaratulstra has always suspected that something was wrong with Luo Shan and secretly reminded Zhou Mingrui, while the mirrored Emperor Roselle is an Angel of the Mystery Pryer pathway."
This intelligence was provided by the Major Arcana card holders after discovering that the mirrored Roselle was eroding and influencing Mr. Huang.
"Based on this, we can make a speculation. Zaratulstra should

have asked the mirrored Roselle, who can control information and influence paintings, for help to confirm if there was something wrong with Luo Shan. The mirrored Roselle reorganized the information of that colorful parrot, controlled it, and made it monitor Luo Shan, but didn't feed back the obtained intelligence to Zaratulstra.

"This is because the mirrored Roselle is secretly cooperating with the one worshipped by the Aurora Order, just like during the last vortex incident," Lumian looked at Jenna and summarized, "Luo Shan was stimulated, developed a psychological trauma, which was discovered by that colorful parrot, who informed the mirrored Roselle. Then, the mirrored Roselle, using the trust of the Celestial Worthy's forces, secretly 'pushed' a bit, causing Luo Shan to bring you and the real target, Franca, to the underground area of Mushu Hospital in the dream."

Jenna suddenly understood.

"That makes sense now."

Beside them, Anthony, before going to probe Peng Deng, had learned from Lumian the key point that Mr. Fool was a transmigrator and what exactly happened last night, so there was no communication barrier now. He understood the previous conversations relatively easily and didn't raise any questions.

Madam Justice looked at them and said with a smile, "Now that we've discussed the important matters, I'll give you a general account of Mr. Fool's experiences, starting with Klein Moretti..."

The relevant events had actually been mentioned in the previous document, but not in enough detail. This time, Madam Justice spoke as if she had seen and heard it personally, starting from the Antigonus family notes and continuing all the way to the end of the Tingen story.

After a moment of silence, Lumian asked slowly, "Captain Dunn and Klein Moretti died just like that at the Blackthorn Security Company, to prevent the descent of the True Creator's spawn?"

"Yes," Madam Magician said with a self-deprecating smile. "Now I understand why Klein Moretti could be resurrected."

Loki's multiple resurrections were a good example.

Lumian fell silent.

Jenna said with some emotion, "No wonder Officer Deng is also a person who maintains order in the dream city."

After expressing her feelings, she asked curiously, "The final events are so detailed, were they narrated by a survivor at the time?"

"Yes." Madam Justice nodded.

Jenna had a flash of inspiration. "Mr. Star?"

The Major Arcana card holder—Mr. Star—was indeed a Nighthawk

of the Church of Evernight!
Madam Justice smiled lightly but didn't give a clear answer.
Madam Magician changed the subject. "The real-world Rozanne also said that as much as she hates others becoming Beyonders, she admires the Nighthawks."
Jenna made a sound of agreement and said with some emotion, "No wonder the Luo Shan in the dream city has always wanted to become a qualified guardian..."
After a brief silence, Madam Justice and Madam Magician took turns talking about the different identities of Mr. Fool, such as Sherlock Moriarty and Gehrman Sparrow.
They didn't dare to go into too much detail, only picking key points to narrate, fearing it would delay matters in the dream city.
Finally, Lumian stood up and said to the Major Arcana cards and his companions, "I'll return to the dream city first."
Madam Justice also stood up and nodded slightly. "We will notify the other Major Arcana cards to be prepared to provide help at any time."
Lumian nodded, made his way back to the second floor, entered his own bedroom, and lay down on the bed.
He stared at the ceiling, not falling asleep quickly. His mind flashed with bits and pieces about Mr. Fool, with all those things that the Major Arcana card holders had emphasized in their narration.
After quite a while, Lumian finally fell asleep.

Chapter 1012: A New Round of Hints

Intis Group, Administrative Department.

Zhou Mingrui, wearing a black T-shirt, walked in and casually scanned the room before saying to Luo Shan, "It's really hot this year. School has started and there's still no sign of cooling down."

Luo Shan nodded repeatedly in agreement and praised the effectiveness of the company's air conditioning.

Zhou Mingrui glanced to the side and back, asking, "Luo Fu didn't come today?"

He had been planning to approach Luo Fu today to ask why she appeared in the underground area of Mushu Hospital last night. However, it was almost an hour into the workday and she still hadn't shown up.

Luo Shan looked around and said in a hushed voice, "Luo Fu is going to resign."

"Hasn't she been working for less than a month? She's resigning before even passing the probation period?" Zhou Mingrui was somewhat surprised, but then felt it was also normal.

For a mysterious person like Luo Fu, working at the company was definitely not for the salary, but for some other purpose. Once that purpose was achieved, or if she felt it couldn't be completed and she might be in danger, she would undoubtedly resign without hesitation.

"Yes, there's something going on at home. Otherwise, who would give up such a good job?" Luo Shan spoke sincerely. "Luo Fu has already submitted her letter and will come tomorrow to go through the procedures."

Luo Fu's resignation made Luo Shan feel that she herself probably wouldn't be fired in the short term.

"She'll come tomorrow?" Zhou Mingrui nodded thoughtfully.

He could foresee that Luo Fu's resignation wouldn't go smoothly. Someone who had just been hired leaving before completing even a month—wasn't that a slap in the face for the recruiters?

Moreover, it would affect the HR department's performance evaluation.

Zhou Mingrui then turned to Luo Shan and asked, "How is Luo Fu doing now? Why did she go to Mushu Hospital last night?"

He spoke with a tone of concern for a colleague.

"She's doing fine now, just hasn't fully recovered emotionally." Without receiving any "instructions," Luo Shan didn't dare reveal too much.

She directly skipped over the latter question.

Seeing this, Zhou Mingrui politely smiled and said, "Slacking time

is over, I'm going back to work."
"Bye-bye." Luo Shan waved habitually.
Zhou Mingrui turned and walked towards the exit of the Administrative Department.
Luo Fu's resignation made him more acutely aware of the undercurrents lurking beneath the surface.
This female colleague seemed to have joined the company specifically for him. She hadn't even fully familiarized herself with the Administrative Department's affairs, yet had already had two meals with him, made some hints, and mysteriously appeared in the underground area of Mushu Hospital when he was investigating it.
Did last night's events cause Luo Fu to resign?
What exactly is hidden in the underground area of Mushu Hospital, and why did Luo Fu and Luo Shan go there?
What specifically did Luo Fu encounter?
Are mystical methods now being used in workplace competition?
Amidst his lampooning, Zhou Mingrui increasingly wanted to find Luo Fu and ask her face-to-face.
He felt that the things around him were getting stranger and stranger!
Luo Fu and Luo Shan too, they clearly showed goodwill and provided effective hints, so why don't they just tell me the truth about what's going on?
We're all people with supernatural powers, what can't be said?
We could be completely open and honest about everything, and discuss things together. Even if I wouldn't believe everything, I certainly wouldn't ignore it completely. I'd remember the key points and verify them one by one in subsequent developments.
If they don't explain anything clearly, how am I supposed to help them?
Are we filming a TV drama here, where one misunderstanding can be dragged out for twenty episodes?
Is there a reason they only hint at things instead of speaking directly?
Is some force preventing them from telling the truth about what's happening?
Are there others monitoring me?
Zhou Mingrui unconsciously raised his head and looked around, but didn't notice anything unusual.
Does the monitoring power come from a supernatural level? Can it even listen in on my private conversations with Luo Fu and Luo Shan?
The first time Luo Fu showed something was wrong, Luo Shan

hinted for me to wait two days before talking to her again. That was the day after my first meal with her, during which Luo Fu had hinted at the existence of supernatural powers and the hidden dangers of beverages after Assassin...

Was it because she hinted at these things to me that it led to her subsequent problems?

Zhou Mingrui returned to his own workstation and sat down, staring at the screen in front of him, seriously considering how to determine if there was monitoring around him, and if so, how to avoid it afterwards, how to meet with Luo Fu and Luo Shan discreetly, and how to communicate in a safe environment.

In the Administrative Department, Luo Shan picked up her phone and sent a message to True Hidden Blade: "Zhou Mingrui came to ask about your situation. He's not unfazed by last night's events, he's just waiting for an opportunity to inquire."

...

In the open parking lot below the Tech Building housing Intis Group's headquarters.

Franca, her hair tied in a ponytail, read the WeChat message sent by Luo Shan.

She had originally planned to take Ludwig and wait around the Hall Film Company, ready to help cover up immediately if Dreamscape Jenna made any mistakes. But after much consideration, she decided to come near the company instead.

Dreamscape Jenna was "professionally trained," with acting skills no worse than the real Jenna. She had also inherited Jenna's memories of applying to the Hall Film Company and signing the contract, and her own dream was to be a good actress. So, as long as there were no accidents like last night, she shouldn't have any problems.

Moreover, the Hall Film Company had a good boss who managed things strictly, and the internal atmosphere was quite good. As long as Dreamscape Jenna didn't go to outside film crews for auditions, she was unlikely to encounter the casting couch.

Of course, even if she did, Franca wasn't worried that Dreamscape Jenna would accept. More than that, she was concerned that Dreamscape Jenna might overreact, use excessive self-defense, and get arrested by the police—she had probed Dreamscape Jenna's personality and style this morning and felt that if Dreamscape Jenna encountered something dirty, she would grab all the sharp objects she could find at the scene and make the other party see red.

Comparatively, Luo Shan's situation was more dangerous.

The forces that caused last night's incident had clearly targeted

Luo Shan, and if one attempt failed, there would be another. Franca didn't want to be careless and have Luo Shan encounter an "accident," die on the spot, or become a puppet of the Celestial Worthy!
After reading the message from Luo Shan and listening to the sound of Ludwig eating, Franca pondered for a moment before typing out a response:
"You can recommend that Zhou Mingrui watch the 'Terminator' series of films."
Luo Shan was suddenly stunned when she received the reply.
She finally understood why the story Luo Fu had initially made up sounded so familiar to her!
Most of it was from a movie plot!
Essentially, it really is a bit similar... Luo Shan pondered for a few seconds, then opened her chat with Zhou Mingrui: "We've been watching old movies lately, the 'Terminator' series. They're much better than current Hollywood blockbusters. You should rewatch them too."
Zhou Mingrui, receiving this seemingly random message, fell into deep thought.
He had long forgotten the details of the Terminator series, but still remembered a bit of the core story.
After a moment, he silently said to himself, Are they trying to tell me that I'm the savior?
Downstairs, in the open parking lot.
Franca alternated between checking her phone and observing the situation, patiently waiting for the lunch break.
Her biggest worry now wasn't Luo Shan's problem, nor where she should go to make people despair, but that running the air conditioning in a gasoline car while waiting wasn't a good thing.
Suddenly, someone opened the car door and sat in the passenger seat.
Franca's spiritual perception had already sensed it was Lumian who had arrived.
Lumian had changed back to his male form and was in disguise, so he wouldn't be recognized as security guard Li Ming at first glance.
"How did you know I was here?" Franca asked, both puzzled and curious.
They hadn't even replenished the Mirror Substitutions they had placed with each other yet!
Lumian smiled, raised his right hand, and pointed to his head. "It's a simple deduction."
Franca rolled her eyes at him. "I just didn't feel like thinking about

it."
Lumian didn't continue to tease her. He summarized the key points of what he and the others had discussed with the Major Arcana card holders, as well as Mr. Fool's past experiences.
"That's truly legendary..." Franca sighed sincerely.
Lumian nodded. "There's another detail. At the time, I was the one who told Jenna and Luo Shan to ask Zhou Mingrui for help, to make a trip to the underground area of Mushu Hospital. On the way, Jenna remembered it was late at night and worried that directly contacting Zhou Mingrui might cause worse things to happen, so she let Luo Shan go alone.
"Zhou Mingrui agreed to help, and after he ran out of the emergency center, Jenna was immediately kicked out of the dream. But she hadn't actually appeared in Zhou Mingrui's sight, and Zhou Mingrui didn't even know such a person existed."
Franca understood what Lumian was trying to express.
"The Celestial Worthy's gaze can lock onto indirect reminders?
"Then when we have Luo Shan tell Zhou Mingrui the truth, we need to be prepared for the relevant people to be kicked out of the dream..."
"I was the one who told Luo Shan and Jenna to go, I was the mastermind, but I wasn't kicked out of the dream," Lumian added.
"Either there's a range or some other limitation on locking onto indirect reminders, or it's because you were already at B2 of Mushu Hospital at the time... Can that place affect or interfere with the Celestial Worthy's gaze?" Franca proposed two possibilities.
Lumian smiled. "If the underground area of Mushu Hospital can indeed interfere with the Celestial Worthy's gaze to some extent, we might be able to use that at a critical moment."
This was a collection of details. They might be useful, or they might have no effect at all, but without collecting them, there wouldn't even be a chance to test them!
Franca tersely agreed and picked up her phone again, saying, "I should let Queen Mystic know about the mirrored Emperor Roselle, and remind her to pay attention to Mr. Huang's contradictory behavior."
After opening the WeChat contact "Bernadette," Franca adjusted her mood and sent an energetic emoji: "Pop quiz!
"Please answer which five seas are referred to by the Five Seas!"
She wasn't sure if the person on the other end of WeChat was currently Queen Mystic Bernadette or Miss Bernie Huang, so she first sent a question whose answer only an outsider would know to verify the other party's identity.
After a moment, Bernadette responded: "The Sonia Sea, the Fog Sea,

do I need to continue?"
"Congratulations, you're got it correct!" Only then did Franca briefly mention last night's events and the possible role played by the mirrored Emperor Roselle, as well as the reasons they had speculated.
After some time, Bernadette replied: "I'd like to discuss this matter in detail. Let's meet at 2 pm at the book warehouse at 15 Jinhua Street."

Chapter 1013: The Queen's Request

Franca showed Lumian Queen Mystic's reply and asked for his opinion,
"Should I go?"
Lumian replied without hesitation,
"I'll go."
"Alright." Franca understood Lumian's meaning.
She now had to completely switch to behind-the-scenes support, and should avoid meeting important people unless she found an opportunity to make others despair.
Sometimes, they'd rather send Ludwig!
Franca considered briefly, then quickly typed on her screen:
"I have an important matter this afternoon. Can Lumina replace me to meet with you?"
After sending this message, Franca glanced at Lumian and added:
"She knows more details about the relevant matters than I do."
"That's fine." Queen Mystic quickly replied.
Only then did Franca say to Lumian,
"Go meet Queen Mystic in your female form. Don't reveal your identity as security guard Li Ming. Although Queen Mystic is our ally, we can't let her know everything, especially identities that still need to remain undercover."
The last time they cooperated with Queen Mystic to deal with Zaratulstra, Lumian had also transformed into a Demoness of Despair.
Lumian raised an eyebrow and said teasingly,
"It feels like your IQ has increased since you fell into a situation where you'd lose control and die if kicked out of the dream."
Franca was used to trading barbs with Lumian, and retorted,
"What does that prove? It proves I'm inherently smart, I just usually can't be bothered to think. Anyway, you're not stupid either, so you can do the thinking for me."
Ludwig, who had finished his burger in the back seat, raised his head in agreement:
"That's right, that's right."
This made Franca fall silent.
Somehow having the child Ludwig agree with her didn't seem quite right...
"I'll go buy you lunch, then scout out the location and wait to meet Queen Mystic," said Lumian, once again stirring up Franca's emotions and making her feel more alive. He opened the car door and got out.
...

2 pm, 15 Jinhua Street.
Lumian, dressed in a woman's shirt and loose pants, wearing sunglasses and a mask, used teleportation to bypass the security guard and went directly inside the book warehouse—Lumina was still a wanted person, so he couldn't openly find an excuse to enter.
There was no one in the book warehouse. Lumian looked at the piles of packaged goods and tall metal shelves, walking forward leisurely.
Suddenly, a lush peach forest with blooming flowers appeared before his eyes. A winding stream in the forest flowed into a towering mountain range and into a small cave.
This isolated Lumian from the outside world.
Then, Queen Mystic Bernadette walked out from the peach forest.
Her slightly curly brown hair was simply tied up. She wore a loose white T-shirt with patterns, tied at the waist, exuding youthful energy and giving a strong student vibe. It wouldn't make anyone suspect Bernie Huang of being overly mature.
"Good afternoon, Your Highness Bernadette," Lumian greeted, removing his sunglasses and mask.
He still greatly admired Emperor Roselle, so naturally, he was quite respectful towards Queen Mystic.
Bernadette nodded slightly and said,
"Good afternoon."
She didn't engage in small talk and went straight to the point.
"Tell me everything that happened last night, not just about the Mirror People."
Lumian only omitted some details about his own changes. He started from when Luo Shan used her Reporter ability and suddenly heard Franca and Jenna talking, realizing she was just an illusory figure in someone else's dream. He continued up to returning to Mushu Hospital, seeing Grisha—Peng Deng's roommate—at the scene through someone else's short video, and the issue with the colorful parrot in the oil painting.
Queen Mystic listened very quietly, without interrupting or asking for details.
Only when Lumian finished did she ask,
"Is Luo Fu a transmigrator?"
Queen Mystic knows about transmigrators too... Well, transmigrators have done quite a few things over the years, possibly even helping her translate the Emperor's diary, and she can enter and exit Mr. Fool's dream city... Lumian nodded.
"Yes."
"Since Luo Fu saw her past self in those 'cocoons' on the light gate, does she believe that everyone in the cocoons is a transmigrator?"

Queen Mystic further inquired.
"Without a doubt, that's what she thinks," Lumian replied cooperatively, although he had roughly guessed what Queen Mystic really wanted to ask.
"What are her guesses about the three empty 'cocoons'?" Queen Mystic's youthful face remained calm.
Here it comes, the real question... Lumian thought to himself, then answered truthfully,
"She suspects they are the Ancient Sun God, Emperor Roselle, and Mr. Fool."
Bernadette's expression changed slightly, but she showed no signs of shock.
She said to Lumian,
"The Ancient Sun God may not have come from a 'cocoon', He has a different origin."
"Uh..." Lumian was stunned.
If it wasn't the Ancient Sun God, then who came out of that "cocoon"?
Bernadette didn't explain, she just mentioned this.
She said with a hint of sighing,
"No wonder Mr. Fool's dream contains all the fairy tales and legends I've heard.
"No wonder those fairy tales and legends have the power of mystical reappearance..."
Lumian closed his mouth, not knowing how to respond for a moment.
After joining the Curly-Haired Baboons Research Society, he actually knew where Emperor Roselle's inventions, writings, and famous sayings came from. After entering the dream city, he confirmed this even more.
However, he still admired Roselle, believing that the Emperor's life journey from an ordinary person to wearing the crown and finally ascending to godhood was rare in the world, very inspiring and admirable. Moreover, the Emperor did indeed change the trends of the times, the world situation, and various aspects of the country of Intis. His legacy was still frequently mentioned today, still benefiting many lower and middle-class people, and still changing some people's destinies.
Bernadette turned sideways, looking towards the brilliant and dreamy pink peach blossom forest that resembled a night sky burning with clouds, and muttered to herself,
"Actually, he rarely told me that those fairy tales and legends were written by himself, thought up by himself...
"Most of the time he would say, I've organized the fairy tales I

heard as a child, I'm telling you the stories that your grandmother once told me, stories that belong only to us, these are stories from my dreams that once brought me a lot of fantasy, I hope they can make your childhood colorful and dreamy too...
"When he said these things, it was as if he was looking through me, recalling his own childhood..."
Lumian suddenly smiled and lowered his head slightly, saying,
"My sister also told me some fairy tales. Every time she told them, I had a similar feeling."
At this moment, he felt a strong resonance with Queen Mystic.
One's father was a transmigrator, the other's sister was a transmigrator, and now they have both passed away, but still retained some hope of resurrection.
Queen Mystic Bernadette looked back at Lumian and nodded gently.
"It wasn't until I entered this dream city and lived here for a while that I felt I truly understood him."
"Me too," Lumian replied with a self-deprecating smile.
Queen Mystic quickly shook off that nostalgic state and said to Lumian,
"I want to ask you for a favor."
"What favor?" Lumian perked up.
Queen Mystic was silent for a few seconds before saying,
"Whether she's currently cooperating with the one worshiped by the Aurora Society, or has jumped back to the Celestial Worthy's camp, or is swaying between the two, her ultimate goal is not what I want to see or am willing to accept.
"I've hesitated for a while, but today I've finally made up my mind. I want to kick her out of the dream as soon as possible, so she can't benefit from this real dream. For this, I'm willing to accept the consequence of never being able to come to this city again."
"You want to take action against the mirrored Emperor Roselle soon?" Lumian suddenly realized.
He noticed that Queen Mystic referred to the mirrored Emperor Roselle not with the pronoun "Her" representing Angels, but with "her" symbolizing females.
"Yes." Queen Mystic nodded almost imperceptibly. "Relying on myself alone, even with a Sealed Artifact, it would be difficult to expel her from the dream, so I need your help."
"No problem. You provided us with great help in the Zaratulstra matter," Lumian agreed immediately.
With the mirrored Emperor Roselle's wavering stance, Lumian didn't dare to bet that She would definitely side with Mr. Fool, so it was better to eliminate the hidden danger in advance.

Queen Mystic added,
"I will prepay you a fee for this help..."
There's no need to be so polite, we didn't give you a fee when dealing with Zaratulstra... Before Lumian could respond, he heard Queen Mystic state the specific amount,
"500,000."
How much? Lumian instinctively doubted his hearing.
He immediately understood that Queen Mystic was also using this matter to send money to him and his team.
And this broke through the suspected limit of 30,000 per transaction.
Does this mean Queen Mystic has made up her mind regardless of the consequences, and is prepared to be kicked out of the dream for the third time? Lumian tentatively asked,
"When do you plan to take action?"
"The sooner the better," Bernadette said concisely.
Lumian considered for a moment before saying,
"Between 3 pm tomorrow and 3 pm the day after.
"And at 2:30 pm tomorrow, I'll go to Star Dream Provisions Store to rent an item, which might also come in handy after Zhou Sasa arrives in Yangdu."
Zhou Sasa would be taking the high-speed rail to Yangdu at noon the day after tomorrow.
Lumian hoped to rent once for two uses, including expelling the mirrored Emperor Roselle from the dream and dealing with the anomalies brought by Zhou Shasha entering the dream city.
"Alright." Queen Mystic didn't elaborate.
She thought for a moment and said,
"Since Huang Jiajia and the others have all become marionettes of the Celestial Worthy, and Lu Yong'an, a Blessed of the Great Mother, has discovered the falsity of your Child of God identity, you must be on guard against them suddenly taking action against Li Keji, cutting off the last hope of curing An Xiaotian."
Hearing these words, Lumian suddenly became alert.
That's right!
After last night's events, whether it's the Celestial Worthy trying to eliminate hidden dangers or the Great Mother wanting to maintain balance, Li Keji could very likely become a key target!
Lumian had originally planned to find Li Keji late tonight when everyone was asleep, to see if the mushroom had met the requirements.
But now it appeared he had to go as soon as possible—right now!

Chapter 1014: Transferred

Crimson Moon Hospital, Psychiatric Ward.
Lumian directly teleported outside Li Keji's hospital room.
He had put his sunglasses and mask back on.
Taking advantage of the momentary absence of people in this area, Lumian knocked loudly on the steel door.
Almost simultaneously, his spiritual intuition told him: there was no one in this hospital room anymore!
Lumian tensed up and Blinked inside the room.
It was empty, with no one there and no mushrooms. The blanket was neatly folded.
Lumian took out a mirror, about to use divination to find Li Keji.
At this point, he frowned, considered briefly, and gave up on the idea, fearing he might divine images he currently couldn't bear.
He teleported outside the ward, keeping his sunglasses and mask on, approached the nurses' station, and said in a deep voice, "I'm here to visit a patient. Which room is Li Keji in?"
The nurse who was organizing medical records looked up and asked in surprise, "You don't know?"
"Li Keji has been transferred back to Mushu Hospital. He's been diagnosed with mental issues. Although he doesn't need to go to jail, he'll have to be confined for treatment from now on."
Transferred back to Mushu Hospital? Lumian's heart sank, and he immediately asked, "When did this happen?"
"Just this morning," the nurse replied, becoming a bit impatient. "If you want to visit him, go to Mushu Hospital."
This morning... At that time, I had returned to the real world to report the situation, Jenna and Anthony had also been kicked out of the dream, leaving only Franca, who wasn't in good condition, to secretly protect Luo Shan with Ludwig. We couldn't look after Li Keji's situation at all. Moreover, last night's events were too urgent, and we had to deal with Franca's mental and psychological issues afterward. We didn't think to notify Queen Mystic in advance... Their timing was impeccable... Lumian asked another question, "Who came to handle the transfer procedures?"
"Of course, it was the patient's family member, his mom," the nurse said, looking puzzled at the mask and sunglasses covering Lumian's face.
His mom... Mother... Lumian's scalp tingled, but he pretended to find it amusing and asked, "How did you confirm that was his mother?"
Would you believe me if I said I was?
The nurse, both annoyed and amused, said, "She came with the

household register!
"And the patient's boss also testified!"
Huang Jiajia was cooperating with Li Keji's "mom" to handle the transfer? Lumian stopped asking questions and turned to leave the psychiatric ward.
His first reaction was to quickly find a deserted corner and directly teleport to Mushu Hospital, to see if he could get the treatment mushroom before Li Keji truly became the child of the Mother, and rescue him.
If the "prison break" failed, he would switch to assassination, completely eliminating this dream manifestation, leaving nothing for the Great Mother.
Just as he was about to activate the black mark on his right shoulder, Lumian had a new idea.
He had no helpers now and needed to find one.
So, he took out his phone, entered a ride-hailing app, and chose a route from Crimson Moon Hospital to Mushu Hospital.
During this process, he walked out of Crimson Moon Hospital and sent a message to Franca: "Li Keji has been transferred back to Mushu Hospital. Bring Ludwig and wait outside Mushu Hospital. If necessary, have Ludwig come in to find me.
"Remember to notify Luo Shan, tell her to be alert this afternoon and extremely careful. It's best if she occasionally goes to chat with Zhou Mingrui.
"We can't lose focus. We can't rescue Li Keji only to lose Luo Shan."
"Okay." Franca replied concisely.
After deleting the chat history using the Information Shredder, Lumian stood by the roadside, patiently waiting for the ride-hailing car to arrive.
In less than two minutes, a white ride-hailing car stopped in front of him.
Lumian quickly opened the front passenger door and got in.
His gaze then turned to the driver, just in time to see him take out a crystal-like monocle and put it on his right eye socket.
Lumian wasn't surprised at all; this was exactly what he had expected.
After the driver started the car, Lumian said casually, "Long time no see."
"Not that long, I often watch you all," Amon said, driving normally without using any Beyonder powers.
"We've probably deciphered the symbolic meanings of Peng Deng, Grisha, and others in the dream," Lumian said matter-of-factly, suppressing his inner anxiety.
"Let's hear it," Amon said, honking the horn as the vehicles in front

slowed down.
It was clear that He had integrated very well into this dream city.
Lumian chose his words carefully and briefly described Madam Justice's conjectures.
Amon laughed. "A Spectator is not a qualified Cryptologist. Although the ideas and direction are not wrong, the thinking is not deep enough. If that young lad Pallez were here, it's possible that all the symbolic meanings would be deciphered."
"Where did we go wrong?" Lumian's purpose in bringing up this topic was to get confirmation from Amon.
According to their speculation, Amon and His father, for some unknown reason, no longer intended to maintain balance at present. They wanted to weaken the Celestial Worthy and let Mr. Fool wake up early, which meant They could be considered temporary allies.
Amon turned His head to look at him and said with a smile, "The Spectator herself has said that it's based on identity and personality to weave real images, not on pathways.
"My father; the True Creator; Adam; the original God Almighty; and Heaven's deputy, the Left Hand of God, the leader of the Kings of Angels, the Dark Angel Sasrir, how many identities is that in total?"
"Five," Lumian said thoughtfully. "So the Dark Angel among the eight Kings of Angels was also derived from the Ancient Sun God..."
This was intelligence he didn't have before.
Amon adjusted His monocle on His right eye, His smile unchanging, and said, "Looking at it this way, it's actually quite simple to decipher the corresponding symbolic meanings:
"The boss of Aurora Company symbolizes the True Creator, influenced by The Fool's cognition, mainly active near the headquarters of Intis Group. Peng Deng and Grisha symbolize the one you hate most and the original God Almighty, but their specific positions are not fixed. They can swap at any time, symbolizing fusion and confrontation. Nie Zhen symbolizes the Dark Angel, representing the part that split off from my father, Adam's rib is his Eve.
"The True Creator and Adam have already achieved consciousness fusion, so They don't need to share rent anymore. They can act under different identities through The Fool's cognition, but Their thoughts are interconnected."
Visionary Adam? Lumian nodded slightly and said, "Zhang Yujia symbolizes your father, the Ancient Sun God?"
"The Corpse Cathedral itself belongs to Him. Zhang Yujia wanders outside the dream city, symbolizing that my father has already left

this stage. Now His successors and the original God Almighty are confronting each other. This is also The Fool's cognition," Amon said in a slightly mocking tone. "As for the symbolic meaning of sharing rent and moving out, I don't need to explain that, right?"
This explanation is indeed clearer, but in this matter, Amon can't be fully trusted either... Lumian chuckled and said, "Why is your father's dream manifestation female?
"Is it because Mr. Fool's other childhood friend is indeed a lady, or in Mr. Fool's cognition, your father gave birth to you and the Angel of Imagination, and also split off the Dark Angel, making Him a successful mother?"
Amon laughed. "The last guy who deciphered this aspect of symbolism mocked it the same way. You two are indeed quite similar."
"Who?" Lumian asked vigilantly.
"Haven't you guessed?" Amon glanced at Lumian. "Red Angel Medici."
"He can also enter Mr. Fool's dream?" Lumian frowned.
Could it be that the Red Angel has turned to the Celestial Worthy?
From what we can see now, apart from true gods and those holding Mr. Fool's gold coins, only a few individuals who have received special grace from the Celestial Worthy can enter this dream city.
Well, it seems other great existences can now send one or two subordinates in through the illusory abyss under Mushu Hospital, like Lu Yong'an. However, the Red Angel is unlikely to cooperate with the Great Mother and others. In the Hostel incident, He just tricked these evil gods...
"He has a corresponding manifestation in the dream city and has received help from a top-tier Dreamweaver, so of course He can come in," Amon explained in a light tone.
"Help from a top-tier Dreamweaver..." Lumian suddenly had a flash of insight. "It wasn't the Angel of Imagination who helped Him in, but the original God Almighty?"
"The enemy of my enemy is my friend," Amon said with amusement in His voice. "However, the enemy of my enemy might still be an enemy, like you and Medici."
"The Red Angel is so quiet in the dream? What is He doing, what is He planning?" Lumian, wearing sunglasses and a mask, asked further.
Amon shook His head. "Go find Him yourself, ask Him."
Before Lumian could ask more, Amon smiled and said, "Peng Deng risked revealing His identity, not just to let you know who He is. Have you deciphered what He really wanted to hint at?"

What He really wanted to hint at... Lumian fell into deep thought.
After about ten seconds, he changed the subject and said, "The dream owner's image in this city is also split?
"Chief Yagates, you, and Zhou Mingrui?"
Amon showed a delighted expression. "Do I look like the dream's owner to you?"
He said in a teaching tone, "You need to learn to filter out the interference of complex information and see the most fundamental facts.
"The most fundamental fact is that The Fool has never accommodated the Uniqueness of the Error and Door pathways, while the Celestial Worthy has."
Wh— Lumian vaguely grasped what Amon was hinting at.
Just as he was about to use vague language and indirect methods to confirm, the car stopped.
"We've arrived at Mushu Hospital," Amon suddenly switched to a skilled ride-hailing driver's tone.
Lumian thought for two seconds and opened the door to get out.
"Remember to give a good rating!" Amon waved and quickly drove away.
"Uh..." Lumian was stunned.
His real purpose in calling a ride-hailing car was to find Amon for help, to rescue Li Keji together, but the other party just left like this!
Left...
As the symbol of the Uniqueness of the Error pathway, Amon can't directly intervene in such matters and can only help indirectly? Lumian withdrew his gaze thoughtfully.
Wearing sunglasses and a mask, he looked at Mushu Hospital, no longer hesitating. He set off towards the psychiatric department located at the back of the building.

Chapter 1015: Treatment

As Lumian rounded the main building and saw the separate small building housing the psychiatric department, his phone vibrated once.

It was a WeChat message from Franca: "I've arrived near Mushu Hospital, parked diagonally across the street."

"Good, I'm about to enter the psychiatric department." Lumian replied using voice input.

He then put his phone in airplane mode to avoid any unexpected disturbances like spam calls during the operation.

He immediately activated the contract mark below his left shoulder, transforming himself into a shadow creature.

He currently didn't know which room in the psychiatric ward Li Keji was confined in, so he couldn't directly teleport there. He needed to search around, and Shadow Transformation was more discreet than "hiding in shadows", making it less likely to be discovered.

Lumian's body quickly thinned and darkened, merging with his own shadow cast by the sunlight, standing alone frozen on the cement ground.

He swiftly glided along, using the shadows of corners, trees, and corridors to make his way into the psychiatric ward, sneaking into the nearest room.

"Haha, haha." The patient in this room was laughing constantly, laughing so hard his waist was bent, tears flowing from the corners of his eyes.

For some reason, Lumian also felt an urge to laugh madly, as if infected by the other's emotions.

He glanced at the patient, confirmed it wasn't Li Keji, and immediately retreated through the shadow of the door crack.

As soon as he returned to the hallway, his state quickly returned to normal.

Lumian didn't delay at all and entered the next room.

He suddenly became irritable, wanting to burst out of the shadows and rush to the nurses' station, demanding they hand over Li Keji.

His ears were then filled with loud shouts:

"I'm not crazy! I'm not crazy!

"Caution can indeed handle most situations, but it can't solve all problems.

"When it's time to take risks, you still need to take risks!"

Lumian roughly determined who the patient in this room was and silently retreated to the hallway of the psychiatric ward.

He glided through the shadows cast by various objects, moving

into another patient room.
What entered his field of vision was a patient locked to the bed, as quiet as a statue.
A feeling of sadness and grief gradually welled up in Lumian's heart. He wanted to go mad, to harm himself.
Wh— He maintained his rationality and didn't linger long in this room.
After regaining his composure in the hallway, Lumian seriously pondered his recent encounters.
As soon as I enter a patient room, I get infected by the corresponding mental patient?
Mental illness has become contagious, similar to the manifestation of that humanoid Sealed Artifact we encountered before...
I understand now, this place is essentially a dream, and the mental patients also have corresponding symbolism.
They symbolize the negative, crazy, extremely irrational emotions and mental states of the dream's subconscious. And interactions within the dream are essentially spiritual interactions, so once you get close, you get affected...
Why are the doctors and nurses here still normal?
Do they symbolize the dream subconscious's power to suppress madness and extremes?
From this perspective, the thoughts that suppress crazy mentalities and extreme emotions can also be infected, which is reflected in the dream as doctors or nurses occasionally going mad?
Hmm, the doctors here, the nurses here, the medicines and medical equipment here can all be used to deal with the dream's own crazy mentality and extreme emotions. They symbolize the corresponding forces...
Lumian turned his gaze to a nearby treatment cart, looking at the syringes and medicines placed on it.
He felt that in special scenarios, these things might be more useful and effective than the treatment drugs he and others carried.
They were part of the dream's power.
Having understood the special circumstances of the psychiatric ward, Lumian maintained his shadow creature state and moved even faster, just glancing at each room to avoid being infected by the emotions of different patients.
However, he didn't find Li Keji or discover any mushrooms.
Not in the psychiatric ward? Lumian quickly left this place, came to the iron gate at a corner of the wall, re-entered under the pretext of visiting a patient, and approached the nurses' station.

Wearing sunglasses and a mask, he said to the nurse on duty, "I'm here to visit Li Keji."
"Wait a little longer, the patient was sent for treatment and hasn't returned to his room yet," the nurse looked up at Lumian.
"Where was he sent for treatment?" Lumian suddenly had a bad feeling.
The nurse explained simply, "B1 of the main building, there's specialized large equipment there."
B1 of the main building... Lumian nodded, turned around, and walked out of the psychiatric department.
On his way to the main building of Mushu Hospital, he restored his phone signal and sent a message to Franca: "Li Keji has been sent to B1, I plan to go look for him.
"If I haven't sent you a message within a quarter of an hour, have Ludwig come find mom, this should be very useful in B1.
"If all else fails, the corpse wax candle can be used once more, and Chief Yagates's honorific name can also be called upon."
Lumian explained in such detail to tell Franca that he still had a way out, to prevent her from risking herself to save him.
After quite a while, Franca replied briefly: "Be very careful, prioritize your own safety."
Lumian switched his phone back to airplane mode, transformed into a shadow creature, and infiltrated the main building.
This time, he didn't choose the elevator, but glided down the dim emergency staircase step by step.
Arriving at B1, just as he turned into the elevator hall, he saw glass doors at the exit.
At this moment, the glass doors were half open, with a wheelchair placed at the entrance.
A person sat in the wheelchair, their entire body wrapped in white bandages, like a living mummy.
Lumian suddenly had a sense of familiarity.
His spiritual intuition told him that the person in the wheelchair was his "colleague", Old Ding, who had been injured by lightning strike at work.
How did Old Ding end up in B1? Where are his family members?
Lumian carefully circled around through the shadows next to Old Ding.
The next second, he saw Old Ding struggling to extend his right hand, reaching towards a white paper pasted on the half-open glass door.
Several words were written on that white paper: "Medical area, no entry to unauthorized personnel"
Lumian withdrew his gaze, not interrupting his infiltration.

As he glided along the shadows on the side of the corridor towards where he suspected patients might be, Lumian gradually became uneasy.
He unconsciously looked down and found that at some point he had separated from the shadows and returned to human form.
His contract ability had naturally become ineffective!
Lumian also noticed that the clothes on his body were slowly changing, transforming into the standard attire of a Mushu Hospital orderly.
Wh— Lumian associated this with the "mummy" Old Ding at the entrance and that notice, thought of the illusory abyss underground and the characteristics of the Mother Tree of Desire pathway, and quickly formed a guess.
There was a strong curse in this area!
The content of the curse was: no entry to unauthorized personnel!
In other words, unauthorized personnel who enter will become authorized personnel, becoming orderlies who frequently enter and exit this place, becoming puppets of the illusory abyss? After figuring this out, Lumian naturally understood how to break this curse.
But he didn't dare to do so.
His method of breaking the curse was to shout on the spot "Mother, I am Your child!"
The essence of this statement was to acknowledge himself as a true Child of God.
And B1 of Mushu Hospital clearly contained the power and influence of the Great Mother, with the "newborn" in the morgue being proof of this.
Under these premises, the Child of God of the Great Mother certainly wouldn't be considered unauthorized personnel!
Lumian felt the abnormal changes in his body accelerating, and for the moment he couldn't think of any other way, so he had no choice but to activate the black mark on his right shoulder and teleport away from this level.
He appeared in the emergency stairwell on the first floor, which was empty.
Fortunately, I could teleport out from B1; otherwise, I would have had to use the corpse wax candle or call upon the honorific names of Madam Magician or Chief Yagates... No, at the speed of the changes just now, the Beyonder ritual wouldn't have had time to take effect... Lumian looked down to examine himself and found that his clothes had returned to normal.
He transformed back into a shadow creature and came to the entrance of the emergency stairwell, observing the up and down

movement of the elevators while pondering how to penetrate basement level one and rescue Li Keji without becoming a true Child of God.
Amidst his swirling thoughts, Lumian saw a special elevator come up from B1, and an orderly pushed out a transfer bed.
A nurse stood on each side of the transfer bed, and lying on it was a man with a thick beard, eyes tightly closed, wearing blue and white striped hospital clothes.
It was Li Keji.
Has the "treatment" ended? Lumian's eyes narrowed.
Was I still too late after all?
He watched Li Keji being pushed out of the elevator hall, following in the shadows all the way, out of the main building and back to the psychiatric department.
After confirming Li Keji's hospital room, Lumian first returned outside, behind some green trees, took out his phone, switched modes, and sent a message to Franca: "Couldn't penetrate B1. There's a curse inside; I was forced to leave early.
"Now, Li Keji has completed 'treatment' and returned to his room. I plan to sneak in to confirm his condition. If it's unsalvageable, I'll execute the cleanup plan."
Franca quickly replied: "If the cleanup is too complicated, we can abandon it for now and bring Ludwig to try.
"I think he's very effective against food-type enemies, like mushrooms."
That makes sense... Lumian replied with an "OK" and directly put the phone into the Traveler's Bag.
There might be a battle coming up, so he needed to protect his phone.
Soon after, Lumian in his shadow creature state slipped through the door crack of Li Keji's room, silently rising up in front of the bed.
He looked around, gazed at the still sleeping Li Keji, and began to assess his condition.
Suddenly, Li Keji opened his eyes and sat up.
Seeing it was Lumian, he showed a genuine smile.
"I've discovered the essence!
"I've succeeded!"
Lumian's expression changed abruptly.
He saw Li Keji's chest swell up, two large mushrooms raising his hospital gown, milk overflowing, while in Li Keji's abdomen, mushrooms that seemed to be formed from flesh and blood writhed and tore through the clothing, as if creating a blood-colored, real, directly exposed uterus.

Chapter 1016: Mushroom Monster

Lumian looked at Li Keji and asked calmly, "What is the essence? What has succeeded?"

Li Keji, with his thick beard and dressed in blue-and-white striped hospital clothes, spread his arms wide and said excitedly, "The essence is that only Mother can bring new life, and only new life can cure your vegetable friend!"

Just as Li Keji finished speaking, a dark iron sword slashed toward him through the air.

The surface of the sword burned with crimson flames, which twisted into a black flame that suppressed madness and brutality halfway through.

After hearing the first part of Li Keji's response, Lumian had already taken out the Sword of Courage from his Traveler's Bag without hesitation.

He swung the sword at Li Keji, whose chest was swollen with milk mushrooms and whose abdomen was entangled by flesh-and-blood mushrooms forming a uterus. He converted the normal flames into Fire of Destruction.

Only this fire could truly kill the Mushroom King Li Keji, who possessed both the unique cognition of Mr. Fool and the power of Mother's new life, preventing him from being resurrected from the ashes!

Just as the black flame of destruction was about to strike Li Keji, the patient room vanished, and in its place appeared a wild, grassy plain.

Li Keji had disappeared as well.

The Fire of Destruction fell upon the wilderness of Paramita, scorching a long trench in the earth.

Within the trench, no grass grew.

Next, Lumian saw the soil in the distance loosen as a gigantic mushroom, covered in dark red veins, shot up from the ground like a massive tree, reaching for the sky.

Each of its mycelia was as thick as a branch, white with blood-red spots. Its cap was Li Keji's enlarged, bearded head. On its "chest," tumor-like growths rose, oozing a milky liquid. Its abdomen was covered with a translucent membrane, and beneath it, flesh mushrooms interbred, seemingly nurturing a jellyfish-like smaller mushroom inside.

Seeing this, small, dense bumps appeared on Lumian's skin, as if he had been mildly corrupted.

At the same time, he felt his life force flowing uncontrollably toward the giant mushroom and noticed that the green grass

across the wilderness was all bending toward Li Keji, turning yellow.
Li Keji, serving as the mushroom's cap, spoke fervently and sincerely, "If you want new life, the current amount of life isn't enough.
"Give me all your lives, okay?"
By now, Lumian's eyes had taken on a dark, iron-black hue, and he found the pale white mark that represented the weakness on the giant mushroom.
He teleported to Li Keji's side, thrusting the Sword of Courage, engulfed in black flames of destruction, into the giant mushroom's abdomen.
Several branch-like mycelia whipped around, forming a dense net of vines that blocked the dark iron sword's path.
They were instantly set ablaze, turning to ash in the rapidly spreading black flames.
The giant mushroom shuddered violently, cutting off the burning mycelia from its body.
The mycelia fell to the ground, failing to affect the mushroom's main trunk.
Lumian followed through with a downward slash of the Sword of Courage.
This produced clusters of burning black fireballs, which exploded immediately.
Rumble!
The violent shockwaves, mixed with destructive black flames, surged in all directions, engulfing both the giant mushroom that was Li Keji and Lumian's own body.
Lumian activated the black mark on his right shoulder, teleporting out of the explosion's range just in time.
In the next second, he saw the giant mushroom ignited, swaying under the force of the shockwave.
Before Lumian could launch a second attack, the giant mushroom shed all the parts engulfed by the Fire of Destruction as if shedding its skin, discarding them before they could reach the cap or affect the abdomen and the "child" inside.
In an instant, a vast amount of ash floated in the air, and the giant mushroom's deeper layers were exposed—pulsing with sinews, flesh, and dark red veins wriggling like worms, exuding a strong milky scent.
All of these parts were writhing and rapidly regenerating.
Li Keji's head, acting as the mushroom cap, showed no hostility, and he happily said to Lumian,
"See? This is the final product.

"Come join us, and you'll also gain new life!"
As Li Keji finished speaking, Lumian had already pulled out a mirror, reflecting the giant mushroom that had shed its mycelia and outer layer.
Then, he pressed his hand, burning with Fire of Destruction, onto the mirror and wiped it once.
Demoness's curse!
A curse imbued with Fire of Destruction!
The giant mushroom jerked violently, causing all its flesh and liquid to shrink inward, wrapping its body and Li Keji's head, serving as the cap, into a bloody sphere.
On the surface of the sphere, clusters of smaller mushrooms stubbornly sprouted.
At that moment, black flames erupted from within, engulfing the entire bloody sphere.
One by one, the smaller mushrooms fell silently, while the layers of flesh rapidly carbonized.
The bloody mass writhed intensely, and one side suddenly split open, spitting out a wet, newborn mushroom.
This new mushroom was nearly identical to the previous giant mushroom, with Li Keji's head serving as the cap, branch-like mycelia hanging down, and tumors bulging, oozing milk. Its abdomen was covered by a membrane, nurturing new life inside. The only difference was that it was slightly smaller, as if it had shrunk by a full size.
Covered in greasy, gray-black afterbirth, the new mushroom shot out from the mother body's power, swiftly escaping the Fire of Destruction's burning area.
New Life!
Li Keji had used New Life to sever the connection between the Demoness's curse and himself just in time!
Is there still a way to escape the curse? As Lumian's life continued to drain rapidly, his mind tensed, and his gaze followed the flying, spore-scattering new mushroom.
His eyes quickly turned a silvery-white tinged with black.
He intended to use the Eye of Calamity to search for the black thread of fate that bound Li Keji, hoping to destroy this New Life and finally kill the mushroom monster in front of him.
Just as the mercury-colored illusory river of fate composed of countless complex symbols appeared in Lumian's vision, he suddenly felt an itch on his skin.
Instinctively, he lowered his head and saw that the small bumps on his skin had grown slightly, beginning to bloom as if about to sprout tiny mushrooms.

He had been corrupted by observing Li Keji's River of Fate!
Instantly, sinister and silent Demoness's black flames ignited on Lumian's body, consuming the burgeoning mushroom clusters without a sound.
Enduring the pain, Lumian teleported to the edge of Paramita.
He wanted to see if he could lure Li Keji to the police station and use the official forces and the power of the dream's main consciousness to eliminate this mushroom monster.
Paramita did not stop Lumian, allowing him to pass through.
What greeted Lumian's eyes was not the patient room of the psychiatric department at Mushu Hospital, but a spacious, dimly lit room, with half-drawn curtains, a desk, bookshelves, and a sofa set.
Lumian stood at the room's entrance.
From the corner of his eye, he saw that the door was half-open, with a conspicuous nameplate embedded on it. The nameplate bore five words in the local dream city script: "Dean's Office."
The dean's office? Lumian tensed even more and instinctively turned his gaze toward the area behind the desk.
There was a leather executive chair, and leaning against it was a figure.
The figure wore a white doctor's coat, had sparse eyebrows, bright brown eyes filled with a smile, and chestnut hair tied into a high bun. Her features were clean and alluring, exuding an elegant air, while she cradled a chubby, swaddled baby in her arms.
Lumian was momentarily stunned.
He knew this person.
She was one of the few surviving villagers from Cordu—Madame Pualis!
Pualis de Roquefort.
As Lumian's thoughts raced, he didn't immediately teleport away. Instead, he looked at Madame Pualis, who sat behind the desk holding the adorable baby, and smiled.
"So the new dean of Mushu Hospital is you.
"What a pleasant surprise."
As he spoke, Lumian recalled that Matriarch Roland of the Church of Earth Mother, an Angel of the Mother pathway, was only the associate dean of Mushu Hospital, yet Madame Pualis was able to be the dean.
What did this signify?
Was Madame Pualis more powerful, or was she the proxy of the Great Mother?
Madame Pualis looked at Lumian, who was wearing a mask and sunglasses, and smiled.

"I was equally delighted and surprised to find you here.
"And you now have a part of Aurore with you—what a double joy.
"I've recently learned a phrase about life's joys: 'Reuniting with an old friend in a faraway place and celebrating your wedding night by candlelight.' Our situation fits the first."
"Why don't you take off your sunglasses and mask so I can get a good look at you, and then we can enjoy our wedding night together and bring Aurore into the world?"
Do all of you followers of the Great Mother talk about having children as soon as you meet? Lumian didn't get angry or upset at Madame Pualis's words.
Some things couldn't be stopped, so it was best to stay calm, just like when the secret ceremony had brought dangerous power, leading to the mutation of the Blood Emperor's remnant aura and the transformation of the souls of the Cordu villagers into soldiers sealed within.
Following Madame Pualis's suggestion, Lumian took off his sunglasses and removed his mask, revealing a bright face with a hint of a cold smile.
If I don't show my face, how can I Charm her better?
And without better Charm, how can I create the best opportunity to escape?
As he kept an eye on the mushroom monster that Li Keji had become, Lumian shifted his gaze to the little angelic baby cradled in Madame Pualis's arms. "Is she your child?"
"Yes," Madame Pualis answered with a smile, her eyes roaming across Lumian's face.
Lumian instantly thought of the empty crib in the Cordu village ruins and asked, as if casually,
"What's her name?"
With a serene smile, Madame Pualis replied, "Omebella."

Chapter 1017: Child

Omebella?

She is also called Omebella?

Was the mysterious baby Madame Pualis had been carrying in Cordu Village named Omebella? Did that empty crib belong to Omebella?

At this moment, Lumian felt as if he had been struck by lightning.

Previously, Madam Magician had joked that as long as the dean of Mushu Hospital wasn't named Omebella, it wouldn't be a problem.

At the time, Lumian thought it was just a horror story, and even if the dean was really named Omebella, it shouldn't be his biggest concern. But hearing that Madame Pualis's child was called Omebella truly sent chills down his spine.

If it were just Madame Pualis becoming the dean of Mushu Hospital, or just her giving birth to a mysterious child who had shown strange qualities in Cordu Village, Lumian wouldn't have been so shocked and frightened. These would have been unexpected but not unreasonable events.

But the baby was named Omebella—the mysterious child Madame Pualis had carried and given birth to in Cordu Village was called Omebella.

If Madame Pualis wasn't lying, if that baby was truly the Omebella Lumian knew, didn't that mean he had once "coexisted" with the infant Omebella in Cordu Village for some time? And later, he had killed another unborn Omebella, obtained Omebella's bloodline through the corresponding umbilical cord remnants, come into contact with the remains of the earliest Omebella, and encountered some things and arrangements related to Omebella!

Had all this been foreshadowed in the disaster at Cordu Village, rather than beginning only when he ate Omebella's umbilical cord remnants?

Lumian suddenly felt as if he was back in a scene from his vagrant life. At that time, he was huddled in a corner, watching a large, slippery, ferocious poisonous snake slowly slithering past him, not daring to move a muscle. Now, he seemed to feel that cold, damp, slippery sensation crawling over him, seeping in bit by bit, silently coiling around him.

If the baby Madame Pualis gave birth to in Cordu Village was Omebella, then who was in Father Montserrat's belly, whom I killed?

Where did the umbilical cord remnants I ate come from, and why could they help me contact the remains of the earliest Omebella?

Why could they make the Mother's children, who lacked necessary

wisdom, mistake me for the Child of God, Omebella?
In the depths of the Underworld, who did that egg nurtured by the ancient god's remains point to? *Why could I hear the call for Omebella?*
Moreover, why did the followers of the Great Mother want to induce me to become the true Child of God, to become the real Omebella? Hadn't Omebella already been born?
What is going on?
Which one is real, and which is fake?
Are they all fake? Are they all real?
Lumian's gaze fixed on the baby in Madame Pualis's arms. He noticed her chubby face, rosy and delicate, incredibly adorable.
"Oh, so she's Omebella. Who's her father?" Although Lumian's inner thoughts were bubbling like boiling water in a steam boiler, outwardly he maintained a calm demeanor.
This was a basic quality of a Hunter, and he also had the endurance of an Ascetic.
Madame Pualis suddenly smiled. "If I said it was you or Aurore, would you believe me?"
"Stop with the hellish jokes. We've never touched you," Lumian said, outwardly unperturbed.
"Yes, I regret that too. I hope we'll have a chance to make up for it in the future," Madame Pualis sighed and said, "Her mother is me, and also the Great Mother. As for her father, on the surface, it's the padre, but there's someone else."
Someone else... Just as Lumian was about to start eliminating the villagers of Cordu Village one by one, heavy footsteps suddenly sounded behind him.
He half-turned and saw the giant mushroom with Li Keji's head as its cap appearing in the dim corridor.
At this moment, the smile on Madame Pualis's face faded slightly. She said in a casual tone, "Come, the child needs you."
As soon as she finished speaking, the baby in the swaddling clothes began to cry loudly.
Hearing this loud cry, Lumian's body instinctively, involuntarily walked towards Madame Pualis, towards the baby Omebella.
It was like two mutually attracted magnets finally meeting.
Lumian suddenly had some realizations:
Madame Pualis wants to do something with my body, which possesses Omebella's bloodline!
After last night's events, Li Keji was quickly transferred to Mushu Hospital for treatment, not only because the Celestial Worthy wanted to eliminate this hidden danger and the Great Mother attempted to balance the situation, but also because Madame

Pualis planned to attract me here!
I refused to seek help from the Great Mother last night to become the true Child of God, so did the Great Mother and the Celestial Worthy temporarily reach an agreement?
Lumian didn't hesitate. He activated the black mark on his right shoulder, attempting to teleport away.
His figure disappeared from the dean's office, but he didn't appear at the entrance of the police station in the dream city.
He arrived in the wilderness again.
In the depths of the wilderness stood a gigantic green oak tree that seemed to connect the sky and the ground. The top of the oak tree appeared to lead to heaven, disappearing into layers of white clouds.
Lumian saw that the surface of the enormous oak tree that seemed to hold up the sky was marked with scorch marks from lightning strikes. Its bark was mottled, concealing vitality.
His gaze followed the complex patterns formed by the mottled bark, instinctively moving upward. Near the top of the tree crown, he saw a newly grown branch.
It had grown tenaciously from a charred spot caused by lightning strikes, entwined with some lush, vibrant mistletoe.
At this moment, this new branch, along with the mistletoe, was grasped by a chubby, fair little hand. The hand belonged to the swaddled baby Omebella.
She wore a floral crown and was "dressed" in a fresh green dress. Madame Pualis, whose lower body had transformed into a giant bird shape and whose back had sprouted brown wings, held her in her arms.
"Come, the child needs you!" Madame Pualis's voice echoed across the entire wilderness. The mushroom monster that Li Keji had become also appeared at the edge of the wild.
Lumian attempted to teleport out to no avail. He immediately threw out a mirror, preparing to enter the area behind the mirror, to see if he could use the mirror world to escape this wilderness.
The next second, the glass surface of the mirror seemed to come alive, softening and writhing, forming a "mouth" leading to a dark depth.
Lumian made a quick decision, abandoning the attempt to penetrate the glass surface, letting the mirror fall on its own.
Smack!
The mirror shattered into multiple pieces, each mercury-coated glass shard desperately crawling away.
Lumian snorted, and quiet black flames surged from within his body. Outside the black flames, thick frost quickly condensed, as if

to create a coffin for slumber.
The invisible spider silk that had already spread throughout the surrounding area retracted, wrapping around the frost layer by layer, preparing to form a huge cocoon.
This was a Demoness's strongest defense mechanism, capable of both dispelling curses and negative influences, and resisting substantial damage.
Lumian's plan was to use this ability to buy time to actively exit the dream or light the corpse wax candle to complete the secret deed ritual.
However, before the spider cocoon could fully form, the Demoness's black flames seemed to take on a life of their own, truly burning Lumian's spirituality. The ice layer that was supposed to provide defense also began to restrict Lumian's movements.
They had all come alive!
Lumian immediately activated the black mark on his right shoulder.
He moved to the edge of the wilderness, far from the giant mushroom man, escaping the influence of the Demoness's black flames and layers of frost.
Although he couldn't teleport out of this wilderness, he could still Blink around within it.
"Come, the child needs you!"
As he heard Madame Pualis's voice, Lumian ran a few steps towards the gigantic oak tree that seemed to hold up the sky.
No good, in this preset battlefield, within Paramita, in front of the baby Omebella, although everyone is suppressed to the Sequence 7 level, I'm still being very effectively restrained. I can't hold out for too long... Should I recite Madam Magician's honorific name or utter "Leodero," the blasphemous incantation? No, I might only have one chance to recite the honorific name, and "Leodero" might not be able to break the giant oak tree's seal on Paramita... If we're going down, let's go big, everyone perish together! As Lumian thought, he reached into the Traveler's Bag and firmly grasped that special mirror world fragment.
Then, he initiated teleportation again, using this to resist the invisible pull of baby Omebella on himself and her strange ability to bring things to life.
After Blinking to the next position, Lumian opened his mouth and quickly recited a sentence in ancient Hermes, "Great Door of All Doors;"
Lumian was about to recite the honorific name of Chief Yagates—Mr. Door—to attract His attention!

This represented the power of the dream subconscious maintaining order.
Although this would result in Lumian himself being permanently kicked out of the dream, Madame Pualis, the mushroom-transformed Li Keji, and baby Omebella here, every single one of them, wouldn't be able to continue "staying" in the dream city!
This was equivalent to eliminating hidden dangers for Jenna, Franca, and others in their subsequent actions.
As for what comes after, trust in teammates!
After reciting the first honorific name, Lumian teleported to another side of the wilderness, avoiding the attacks of Madame Pualis and Li Keji.
"Guide of the endless cosmos;"
Lumian finished one sentence and quickly disappeared from his original spot.
Seeing this, Madame Pualis opened her mouth, about to unleash a Banshee's Shriek.
At this moment, a male version of Lumian appeared in the wilderness.
He was a shallow mirror image created by the mirror world fragment, very weak.
He spread his arms and shouted loudly in ancient Hermes, "Leodero!"
This voice burst out almost simultaneously with the Banshee's Shriek. As the shallow mirror image shattered under the influence of the sound waves, the sky above suddenly darkened.
In the darkness, dense clouds gathered, and countless silver-white electric snakes jumped to form a huge lightning bolt, striking towards that giant, sky-supporting green oak tree.
Smack!
A large number of small, silver-white electric snakes crawled over the surface of the oak tree, creating patches of charred marks, but it didn't completely die, still constantly regenerating.
This effect temporarily paralyzed Madame Pualis and baby Omebella.
Crack, the Mirror Substitution Lumian, who had shattered under the Banshee's Shriek and the overflow of lightning, appeared not too far from Li Keji, reciting the third line of the honorific name.
"Key to all mysterious worlds."

Chapter 1018: "Desperate" Struggle

As Lumian recited the third line of the honorific name, the dark clouds and lightning in the sky suddenly collapsed towards the center, forming a huge vortex swirling upwards. It was as if a giant with the sky as its face had opened its single eye, or a strange tunnel with an unknown destination had appeared out of thin air.

This vortex rapidly expanded, as if it would tear apart heaven and earth, swelling into a door.

Seeing this, Madame Pualis, who had just broken free from her paralyzed state, frowned slightly. Holding baby Omebella, she shrank into the interior of the giant green oak tree that seemed to hold up the sky, disappearing from Lumian's sight.

Lumian then saw the mushroom monster with Li Keji's head as its cap standing rigidly in place, as if it had encountered some kind of restraint.

Immediately after, the mushroom monster began to disintegrate from its abdomen, like a vase smashed to the ground, breaking into many large pieces.

These pieces continued to break apart, and in just a few seconds, they became a pile of particles barely visible to the naked eye.

The disintegration rapidly spread to different parts of the mushroom monster's body, finally reaching Li Keji's head that served as the mushroom cap.

The head quickly became as if it were pieced together from fragments, but Li Keji's face showed no trace of hatred or resentment.

His expression twisted uncontrollably from pain, but his eyes were unusually sincere and joyful.

He struggled to say to Lumian, "I really... succeeded...

"Join... us... let's go... be reborn together..."

Before he finished speaking, Li Keji's head shattered even more severely, breaking into individual pixels.

Almost simultaneously, Lumian found that the giant oak tree had suffered a similar fate.

But after it disintegrated, Madame Pualis and baby Omebella did not appear in the tree's core.

They had hidden somewhere unknown, or perhaps had left the dream in some way beforehand.

So powerful... Is this the power of the dream's main consciousness maintaining order? Lumian activated the black mark on his right shoulder, trying to escape the current collapse of Paramita.

Although he had mentally prepared himself to be completely

kicked out of the dream and never be able to return, he hadn't been sentenced yet, had he?
He had to struggle a bit!
What if he succeeded?
Lumian's figure immediately disappeared from the spot.
His chosen destination was the entrance of Yangdu Prison.
Yes, I've committed a crime, you can lock me up, but don't "exile" me!
The next second, Lumian appeared in a spacious office, seeing a middle-aged man wearing a clean white shirt with black diamond-patterned police ranks on his shoulders.
This middle-aged man had a rigid demeanor, with deep black hair interspersed with some white. He sat quietly behind the desk, looking at Lumian with deep brown, almost black eyes. He was clearly the chief of the dream city's Police Department, the symbol of the Uniqueness of the Door pathway, Yagates!
My teleportation destination was changed to the police chief's office? Lumian suddenly had this realization.
At this moment, Yagates asked in a deep voice, "Who are you, and what do you intend to do in Yangdu?"
Along with the deputy chief's questioning, Lumian suddenly felt a strong rejection from the dream and his own rapid marionettization.
He understood very well that if he left the dream city like this, he would never be able to return.
Lumian's thoughts raced as he made a final struggle.
He recalled a hint Amon had given him on the way to Mushu Hospital.
"The most fundamental fact is that The Fool has never accommodated the Uniqueness of the Error and Door pathways, while the Celestial Worthy has..."
This sentence didn't mention that Mr. Door had long accommodated the Uniqueness of the Door pathway, and Amon had briefly accommodated it...
So, the Chief Yagate's essence is a product of the dream subconscious cognition, Mr. Door's spiritual imprint, the Celestial Worthy's spiritual imprint, and a bit of Amon's spiritual imprint, combined to symbolize the Uniqueness of the Door pathway, symbolizing the dream's main consciousness maintaining order...
Chief Yagates... only the dream subconscious part has a bit of Mr. Fool's spirit... To avoid being kicked out this time, or not being completely kicked out, I can only find a way to strengthen or stimulate Mr. Door's spiritual imprint... Lumian had an inspiration in a very short time and recalled Madam Magician's

introduction to Mr. Door.
Before his thoughts stalled completely, before the dream's rejecting force threw him out, Lumian blurted out in response to the Chief's question, "I am... an ally of the... Abraham family!"
Suddenly, Lumian felt the air around him solidify.
At the same time, he noticed that the Chief's deep brown, almost black eyes showed a hint of confusion and contemplation. His brows furrowed unconsciously, as if trying to remember something but unable to truly recall.
The force rapidly marionettizing Lumian suddenly slowed, and the strong rejection from the dream did the same.
As expected... Chief Yagates mainly embodies the conflict between Mr. Door's spiritual imprint and the Celestial Worthy's spiritual imprint... Just now, I was thinking that even if being completely kicked out of the dream was unavoidable, I should still tell Chief Yagates about Mr. Door directly with the idea of mutual destruction, stimulating the corresponding spiritual imprint to make it more active... Lumian's condition improved considerably, and his thoughts were no longer so stalled.
Seeing that Chief Yagates didn't respond, he further said, "My guide is a student of a member of the Abraham family, and now she is protecting the entire Abraham family!"
Chief Yagates's expression grew more confused, but his face was no longer stern.
Lumian quickly examined himself and found that the dream's rejecting force still existed but had weakened slightly.
It's working, I need to increase the intensity! Lumian thought for just a second before shouting, following his spiritual intuition, "I am a Hunter, and also a Demoness, and I still have traces of Alista Tudor's aura on me!"
"Alista Tudor..." Chief Yagates murmured, repeating the name as if it were both familiar and unfamiliar.
Feeling that the dream was still rejecting him, Lumian considered for a moment and said, "I've also been corrupted by the crimson moon, but currently, the situation is under control."
He knew that Mr. Door had once encountered corruption from the Great Mother, which was a common point between them.
Earlier, he would have directly stated that it was corruption from the Great Mother—after all, it was a desperate struggle, what couldn't be said?
But now, seeing hope of not being completely kicked out of the dream, he naturally dared not speak too plainly, fearing that it would not only stimulate Mr. Door but also the Celestial Worthy, causing the situation to take a sharp turn for the worse!

In a popular saying in dream city, this would be like "he who is down need fear no fall."
Previously, Lumian was down and had nothing to lose, but now the change in the situation had put him back on his feet, giving him something to be cautious about.
Chief Yagates once again gazed at Lumian in his Demoness of Despair state, seemingly re-evaluating this wanted criminal who had brought chaos and conflict.
But the dreamscape's rejecting force didn't weaken further.
Lumian endured this rejection and rapid marionettization, and thought of another connection between himself and Mr. Door.
With an attitude of giving it a try, he said, "Amon once guided me."
He said this not only because Mr. Door and Amon were both Grand Dukes of the Tudor Empire, but also with the hidden intention of stimulating that bit of Amon's spiritual imprint within the Chief.
"Amon..." Chief Yagates raised his right hand and pinched his chin.
Lumian saw his reaction but didn't feel the dream's rejecting force and rapid marionettization force continue to weaken.
It's still not enough, just a little more... Lumian shouted one last time before he could no longer resist that rejecting force, "I came to Yangdu to fight against those destroyers, to fight against the apostles of evil gods, to prevent the evil gods from invading!"
As soon as he finished speaking, Lumian felt the dream's rejecting force suddenly weaken, and the force trying to marionettize him became vague and unclear.
Chief Yagates, looking at Lumian, slowly nodded. "I can sense that you're not lying.
"Breaking the law must certainly be punished, but if there are reasons and it's pitiable, the punishment can be reduced."
Hearing these two sentences, Lumian quietly breathed a sigh of relief.
His interpretation of this was: he would be imprisoned, but not for life or sentenced to death;
he would be kicked out of the dream, but not completely kicked out.
"I accept the punishment," Lumian didn't argue further, because Chief Yagates had already passed his judgment.
He only sincerely requested, "Can I notify my family?"
"You may." The stern-faced Chief Yagates didn't refuse this request.
Lumian quickly took out his phone and, in front of Chief Yagates, sent a voice-to-text WeChat message to Franca:
"I'm fine, but I might be locked up for a while. You can ask Miss Huang for help to find a lawyer, see if they can get me out on bail.
"The mushroom monster has been eliminated, but Li Keji said he

ultimately succeeded. Wait for Jenna to come back, and have her take Li Lu to tour the wards in Crimson Moon Hospital and Mushu Hospital where Li Keji was hospitalized. See if they can discover anything.
"Also, pay attention to whether Mushu Hospital has changed its dean."
After sending this message, Lumian waited for about ten seconds before receiving a brief reply from Franca:
"Okay."
Lumian immediately used the Information Shredder to delete the chat history along with the contact list, then put the phone back into the Traveler's Bag.
After doing this, he looked back at Chief Yagates. "I'm ready."
Only then did the deputy chief pick up the desk phone and dial a number.
"Deng, come over here for a moment."
As he spoke, Lumian felt the dream's rejecting force become strong once again.
He no longer resisted, following this force to exit the dream.
...
Trier, inside a luxurious villa.
Lumian opened his eyes in bed for the second time in one day.
After examining his state, his first reaction was to try to enter the dream city again.
The next second, he felt he wasn't blocked, so he stopped this behavior, planning to wait 24 hours before trying again.
From a timing perspective, this wouldn't affect Queen Mystic's plan to banish the mirrored Emperor Roselle.

Chapter 1019: Who is the Father?

Phew... Lumian exhaled, got out of bed, and walked out of the room.

In the living room downstairs, Madam Justice was serving Madam Magician, Madam Judgment, Jenna, and Anthony the most authentic Loen afternoon tea.

This was also to soothe the minds and spirits of the two Minor Arcana, helping them relax and feel the reality of the present moment.

"Why have you left the dream again?" Jenna looked at Lumian in the living room doorway with surprise.

"I was kicked out," Lumian said with a smile.

Compared to being completely kicked out, being able to enter the dream again was indeed something to be happy about.

"Because of Li Keji?" Madam Magician asked thoughtfully.

"Yes." Lumian sat down and recounted his agreement with Queen Mystic, Li Keji's transfer and tragic treatment, and what Amon had said in the ride-hailing car.

After hearing Amon's interpretation of the symbolic meanings of the dream images of Peng Deng, Grisha, and others, Madam Justice said somewhat embarrassedly, "I'm really not an expert in this area."

"That's perfectly normal," Madam Magician said with a smile. "Mr. Pallez's interpretation will arrive soon, and we can compare it with Amon's."

After saying this, she gestured for Lumian to continue.

Lumian went on to describe Li Keji's transformation, Madame Pualis's appearance as the new dean of Mushu Hospital, the appearance of baby Omebella, and what happened after he recited Mr. Door's honorific name.

"Using ties worked?" Madam Magician asked, both surprised and amused to hear that Lumian wasn't permanently kicked out of the dream city and could enter once more.

If she had known this earlier, she might have been able to obtain a better outcome previously!

Madam Justice glanced at Madam Magician, reading her true thoughts.

In Madam Justice's view, this actually reflected a difference in personality:

Being permanently kicked out of the dream wouldn't result in death, and one could still follow the guidance of fate to give away the lucky coin, find new helpers, and continue exploring and experimenting in the dream city. Therefore, Madam Magician

couldn't have had the mindset of being on the brink of perishing and struggling desperately, so she more easily accepted the corresponding outcome.
Lumian was different. He had experienced being a tramp, and in such a life, every bit of resource and every opportunity was extremely important. Therefore, he wasn't used to giving up and would instinctively struggle until failure truly arrived.
"It works," Lumian recalled. "Chief Yagates had the strongest reactions to things related to the Abraham family and protecting the dream city from invasion by evil gods. His feedback on these was also the most positive. Hmm, the names of the Blood Emperor and Amon also stimulated him to some degree, giving him a sense of familiarity. But he didn't have an obvious reaction to the matter of the Great Mother's corruption."
"Related to the Abraham family... protecting the dream city from invasion by evil gods..." Madam Magician suddenly sighed.
Madam Judgment then said to Lumian, "After experiencing Amon's deification, the Great Mother's corruption probably doesn't have much manifestation in Chief Yagates anymore.
"And only you could elicit certain reactions from Chief Yagates through the names of the Blood Emperor and Amon."
Lumian understood Madam Judgment's meaning.
Only someone like him, carrying the residual aura of the Blood Emperor and Amon's boon, could say such words with credibility and bring about genuine stimulation.
"Let's hope that the things you mentioned can make Mr. Door's spiritual imprint on Chief Yagates more active and maintain it for a while. This will be very helpful for subsequent probing and experiments." Madam Justice nodded in agreement.
She vaguely felt that the lucky coin ending up with Lumian after all its twists and turns was indeed the guidance of fate.
There was only one person who simultaneously embodied the concepts of Hunter, Demoness, demigod, Amon's boon, residual aura of the Blood Emperor, Omebella's bloodline, Underworld Daoist's seal, relative of a transmigrator, and having a connection to the Abraham family.
At this point, Jenna, more concerned about another matter, raised a question, "What's the deal with that baby Omebella that Madame Pualis was holding?"
What impact would this have on Lumian?
"When I arrived in Cordu, the crib was long empty. All I know is that the Child of God has already been born in the spirit world. The initial root of all this was indeed the child Madame Pualis 'lost'."
Madam Magician slowly shook her head.

Lumian recalled and said, "Last year, in Trier, Madame Pualis said that the child had died long ago, killed by her father—the padre—who didn't know it was his child...
"This time, Madame Pualis said again that the child's father was ostensibly the padre, but actually someone else. Who could it be?"
Madam Magician pondered for quite a while, then said with a slightly peculiar expression, "Perhaps, at that time, baby Omebella had to die because she didn't yet have sufficient conditions to truly be born into the real world. Being killed by her father might be an important symbol for her future rebirth and arrival in reality."
"You have a guess about her real father?" Madam Justice looked at Madam Magician, not hiding her curiosity.
What kind of guess could make Madam Magician's expression change so obviously and strangely?
Seeing Lumian, Jenna, and others also looking at her, Madam Magician cleared her throat and said, "It's just a guess, I can't guarantee it's correct."
"Who?" Madam Judgment asked cooperatively.
Madam Magician looked up at the sky and lowered her voice. "Eternal Blazing Sun."
What? Jenna and Anthony were stunned.
Madam Justice and Madam Judgment were equally surprised.
Eternal Blazing Sun? Lumian looked at Madam Magician with only one thought in mind, *How did she make that connection? Is this what it means to be a novelist?*
Madam Magician stood up and began to pace as she spoke, "Guillaume Bénet was the padre of the Eternal Blazing Sun Church in Cordu Village, essentially the representative of the Eternal Blazing Sun in this parish. Is there any problem with this statement?"
"No." Jenna instinctively shook her head.
This was basic theological knowledge.
Madam Magician looked at Lumian.
"You saw Madame Pualis and the padre having an affair in the cathedral at that time, right?"
"Yes." Lumian nodded slightly.
"Having an affair and conceiving a child in the Eternal Blazing Sun cathedral, near the altar, with the representative of the Eternal Blazing Sun could indeed point to the Eternal Blazing Sun as the child's father. But the premise is that the Eternal Blazing Sun Himself agreed or acquiesced, which is impossible, right?" Madam Judgment felt this was something a High-Sequence being of the Sun pathway wouldn't do.
Madam Magician smiled. "The Eternal Blazing Sun certainly didn't

agree or acquiesce at the time, and might not even have known about it. This is also one of the reasons why that baby had to die after being born in Cordu Village—the corresponding symbolism wasn't established yet.
"But do you remember what happened afterwards? The Eternal Blazing Sun pretended to cooperate with the Great Mother, letting Lady Moon of the Nightstalkers conceive a Child of God.
"Later, the birth and advent of that Child of God helped Red Angel Medici successfully kill Vermonda Sauron and obtain that Conqueror Beyonder characteristic.
"Not long after that Child of God was sacrificed, Madame Pualis—who entered Fourth Epoch Trier disappeared—unaffected by the subsequent cleanup.
"These events, when viewed separately, don't seem problematic. But when connected, they point to something."
Madam Justice nodded thoughtfully.
"The Eternal Blazing Sun used the Great Mother to make Red Angel Medici's plot succeed, but was also used by the Great Mother?"
Madam Magician sighed and said, "What the Great Mother wanted from the beginning wasn't the baby in Lady Moon's womb, but the act of the Eternal Blazing Sun making Lady Moon conceive a Child of God—this symbolism.
"Once that Child of God died, the long-deceased baby Omebella, who had the basic symbolism, inherited this relationship, gained new life, and helped Madame Pualis escape the subsequent cleanup.
"It wasn't until then that baby Omebella was truly born, but she wasn't complete enough yet and needed to find a medium to descend into reality. After that, whether it was Father Montserrat or that bird egg in the depths of the Underworld, they were probably preparing for this."
"Now, I'm the best medium?" Lumian suddenly understood why Madame Pualis wanted him to come over, saying the child needed him.
Jenna listened in a daze, taking quite a while to sort out the relationships.
She asked confusedly, "But letting the father-child relationship of Lady Moon's child be inherited by the long-deceased baby Omebella doesn't seem like something within the Great Mother's authority."
"The Celestial Worthy—if the two great existences were already cooperating at that time." Madam Magician answered concisely.
"Reasoning it out this way, the Eternal Blazing Sun really could be the father of that baby Omebella in Madame Pualis's arms..." Lumian couldn't help but mutter, "The padre wasn't wrong when

he said the affair was an action of the holy church... Although he himself didn't know the true meaning... Is this also a manifestation of symbolism?"
The room fell silent.
After quite a while, Madam Judgment broke the silence. "We need to report this to the Eternal Blazing Sun Church."
This wasn't to let the clergy of the Eternal Blazing Sun Church know about the "scandal", but to remind the true god Eternal Blazing Sun to pay attention to the relevant issues.
The Great Mother making Omebella's father a deity was certainly not just to make the child's status more noble, to become a true Child of God. There must be hidden purposes!
"But how should we explain this to the clergy of the Eternal Blazing Sun Church? With their fanaticism and purity, I'm afraid they might purge me on the spot." Madam Magician expressed a troubled look.
Indeed, we can't just tell those padres, bishops, and archbishops that their god was seduced by an evil god, can we? Lumian grumbled inwardly.
"Just say that Madame Pualis has appeared again, with a child between reality and illusion named Omebella, and that Omebella's father is ostensibly Guillaume Benet, the padre of Cordu Village, but actually someone else," Madam Justice said, choosing her words carefully. "Then mention that the baby had actually already died in Cordu Village, killed by the padre. With the Red Angel Medici's intelligence, it wouldn't be hard to make the relevant associations and come to similar conclusions."
"Alright." Madam Magician nodded solemnly.
After agreeing, this Major Arcana sincerely sighed. "I've realized that everyone who tries to use the Great Mother ends up being used by the Great Mother."

Chapter 1020: Preparation

Hearing Madam Magician's sigh, everyone turned their gaze towards Lumian.

Smiling, Lumian replied, "Well, it's not just the Great Mother using us. When the time comes, let Them decide the victor first."

This was his usual attitude towards issues that couldn't be immediately resolved but weren't life-threatening. Otherwise, his mental state and emotions would have exploded long ago.

"But we should still be vigilant and try to stay away from the Great Mother's followers," Madam Judgment specifically reminded him.

Lumian smiled wryly. "Sometimes, it's not a matter of whether I want to avoid them or not."

His spiritual intuition told him that even if he didn't return to Mushu Hospital, even if Madame Pualis and baby Omebella were forced to leave the dream due to Chief Yagates' attention, he would encounter them again in the real world in the near future.

This seemed to be a predestined fate, ever since he ate the remnants of Omebella's umbilical cord and truly came into contact with that bird egg in the depths of the Underworld and the Sealed Artifact—Gift of the Land.

...

Dream city, at the entrance of the Police Department.

Two imposing lawyers had secured bail for the pitiful Lumina.

On one of the floors of the Police Department's main building, Deng stood behind a window, watching Lumina bow and get into a car. He frowned and said to Chief Yagates, "Chief, why didn't we refuse her bail request?"

Yagates, also standing by the window, smiled helplessly and said, "I wanted to refuse too, but she really didn't kill Zaratulstra. There's both witness and physical evidence. At the time, she and that child were still in the face changer's line of sight.

"As for her possible accomplices, haven't you tried already? You couldn't get anything out of her. She seems to have truly lost her memory, with no corresponding memories even in her subconscious.

"After this, start from her social relationships and conduct a thorough investigation."

"Yes, Chief," Deng agreed with this investigative direction.

Yagates thought for two seconds, then said slowly, "Secretly list Mushu Hospital as a key investigation target as well."

"What happened?" Deng asked vigilantly.

Yagates turned his gaze back to the street below.

"After Li Keji was transferred back to Mushu Hospital, he turned

into a monster. I cleaned it up. His transformation into a monster is closely related to the new dean at Mushu Hospital.
"Before long, Mushu Hospital will probably report Li Keji as missing."
"Yes, and last time, that corpse walked to Mushu Hospital's morgue." Deng nodded with a grave expression.
...
Trier, inside a luxurious villa.
Jenna pushed open the door to the top floor sunroom and saw Lumian sitting on the spacious balcony, intently gazing at the quietly flowing Srenzo River not far away.
At this time, the sun was setting, draping the classical buildings on the opposite bank in a golden-red coat, making bright, scattered spots of light race away along the dim water surface.
The whistles of steam ships returning to port sounded occasionally.
"What are you thinking about?" Jenna asked curiously as she walked towards the balcony.
Lumian's initially unfocused gaze gradually sharpened. He said thoughtfully, "I'm thinking about two things Amon said."
"Which two?" Jenna stood at the edge of the balcony, leaning on the railing, also admiring the Srenzo River under the setting sun.
Lumian recalled and said, "One was that what Peng Deng really wanted to hint at was something else.
"The other was that we need to learn how to filter out the interference of complex information and see the most fundamental facts."
At this point, Lumian murmured to himself, "The most fundamental facts..."
Jenna half-turned her body, about to discuss whether such words from Amon, a top-tier con artist, could be trusted and to what extent, when she saw Lumian suddenly stand up and walk out of the solarium.
She was stunned for a moment, then quickly followed.
Lumian came to the living room on the first floor and said to Madam Magician, who was reading a book, "I have some guesses and ideas. When I return to the dream, I plan to organize an action soon to weaken the Celestial Worthy and awaken Mr. Fool. At that time, please fully cooperate with me."
Madam Magician stood up abruptly, not bothering to ask Lumian what new guesses and ideas he had, and directly confirmed, "How confident are you that the direction is correct?"
Lumian chuckled. "Not very, it's more to verify the guesses.
"We've already collected a lot of information and obtained some

resources, and Zhou Sasa is about to arrive in Yangdu. This symbolizes that the situation in the dream has developed to a turning point. It's time for us to take initiative and do something, we can't always be passive.
"When the time comes, if we succeed, everyone can rejoice. Even if we can't fully awaken Mr. Fool, it shows that we've found the right path, and we can continue to push in this direction afterwards. If we fail, we can eliminate some incorrect guesses and wrong directions, and we won't need to waste time on these aspects in the future. Hehe, I only have one last chance to enter the dream, if we do encounter failure, it's just right to pass on the lucky coin, and not hinder the efforts of those who come after."
Jenna was about to ask about an important detail when Madam Magician had already asked for her, "What about Two of Cups? She hasn't fully digested her Despair potion yet."
Lumian chuckled in response.
"She won't directly participate. If the attempt fails, the dream will continue to exist, not affecting her subsequent digestion of the potion. If it succeeds, her Despair potion should be directly digested, as will mine.
"Well, to be safe, please ask Mr. Sun to stand by Franca's bedside in advance, ready to help her extract the Demoness of Despair Beyonder characteristic."
"Alright," Madam Magician agreed to Lumian's request.
She then asked, "What are your new guesses and new ideas?"
"I can't tell you for now." Lumian smiled.
He then explained, "All of you are closely connected to Mr. Fool, which also means all of you are closely connected to the Celestial Worthy. Although most of you won't be influenced by this, you might be secretly watched by the Celestial Worthy, allowing Him to grasp some information.
"I'll tell you my thoughts when the operation officially begins."
Madam Magician felt this most deeply. She nodded slightly and said, "The problems for me and Mr. Pallez mainly come from our own pathways and status, but others do frequently enter and exit above the gray fog, occasionally praying to Mr. Fool.
"Alright, you guys are the ones in the dream city now, and you're the captain, so you lead."
...
Dream city, late at night.
Jenna, who had returned, left Room 2303 of Building 5 in Dechuang Garden with Ludwig, while Franca stayed behind to take care of Lumina.
Although Franca had observed Mushu Hospital in the afternoon

and found that there were many people around who seemed to be plainclothes police, believing that the cultists inside would behave for a while, she still thought it necessary to guard against the possibility of Lumina being drawn by Omebella's bloodline and sneaking over there.
She hadn't seen any news about changing the dean on Mushu Hospital's website, official account, or video channel.
In a hidden place not far from Crimson Moon Hospital.
Jenna took out the Ice Amulet that Franca had given her from the Traveler's Bag—Franca, who had become a Demoness of Despair, no longer needed external help to directly enter the area behind mirrors and travel through the mirror world, so she had given all the corresponding charms to Jenna.
After setting up a makeup mirror, Jenna held Ludwig's hand with one hand and gripped the Ice Amulet with the other, activating the latter.
In the flickering light of the glass, the two instantly dove into the mirror hidden in the corner, traversing to behind the mirror-like object outside Li Keji's original hospital room.
After observing for a few seconds, Jenna led Ludwig out of the mirror-like object and nimbly leapt into the corridor.
Because the room was empty with no patients staying temporarily, the iron door wasn't locked. Jenna opened a small gap and slipped inside.
Then, she said to Ludwig, "See if there's anything edible here?"
Ludwig quickly pointed to the blanket on the bed.
"It can be eaten."
A second later, he pointed at the bed itself and said, "This can be eaten too."
"..." Jenna was speechless for a moment, then after a few seconds said, "I mean better food, like mushrooms."
Ludwig looked around, not neglecting the ceiling and gaps between floor tiles.
19:50
"There isn't."
There isn't any... Jenna, taking advantage of the remaining effects of the Ice Amulet, left the place with Ludwig.
Before long, she repeated the process, appearing with Ludwig in Li Keji's room in the psychiatric ward of Mushu Hospital.
"Is there any better food here, similar to mushrooms?" Jenna looked at Ludwig again.
Ludwig searched carefully, sniffing around, and said, "There isn't."
Li Keji's final product isn't in either place... *What to do now?* Jenna didn't dare stay in the Mushu Hospital room for too long, quickly

leaving the psychiatric ward and coming to the tree-lined road outside, planning to circle to the front of the main building to catch a car home by the roadside.
The power of the Ice Amulet to traverse the mirror world had completely faded, and Jenna didn't want to unnecessarily use another corresponding charm.
Walking neither fast nor slow while holding Ludwig's hand, Jenna pondered the possible whereabouts of that therapeutic mushroom.
Did it fuse with Li Keji and vanish into thin air under Chief Yagates' gaze?
Or did Li Keji throw it into some corner of Mushu Hospital's basement before receiving 'treatment'?
The basement of Mushu Hospital doesn't welcome unrelated personnel... *How to search?*
Use the 'Leodero' spell to split it open, but that would destroy the mushroom too...
As Jenna thought about this, she suddenly had a spiritual premonition.
She abruptly turned her body halfway, raising her head to look at the main building of Mushu Hospital close by, towards a room high up.
A face suddenly appeared behind the glass sleeping in darkness, a face wrapped in white bandages with only the eyes and nostrils exposed.
In Jenna's moment of terror, something passed through the glass, falling down lightly.
The bandaged face retreated from the window.
With her Night Vision and eagle-like eyesight, Jenna quickly identified what was floating down.
It was a dried, shriveled, lifeless jellyfish-like mushroom.
This mushroom corpse fell much faster than leaves, and in just a few seconds, Ludwig reached out and caught it.
Seeing this, Jenna had a thought and blurted out a question to Ludwig, "Can it be eaten?"

Chapter 1021: A Night Passes

Jenna had noticed that the jellyfish-like mushroom was already withered and dead, unable to treat An Xiaotian, which was why she asked Ludwig if the mushroom could be eaten.

Of course, she didn't mean for An Xiaotian to eat it. As a vegetative patient, An Xiaotian no longer had the ability to chew and swallow. And grinding the mushroom into powder or juice to provide to An Xiaotian via intravenous drip was an area she didn't understand and couldn't judge whether it would be effective—Demonesses had always only dealt with spreading diseases and plagues, lacking knowledge and abilities in medical treatment.

What Jenna really wanted to ask was whether Ludwig could eat this mushroom, and if after eating it, he could gain the ability to treat vegetative patients.

Ludwig stared at the dried mushroom in his palm, licked his lips and said, "It can be eaten."

He paused for a moment, hesitated for two seconds and added, "But I don't know what can be gained from it."

Even a professional food analyst can't tell the cooking method and effects—this mushroom is indeed very special... Jenna suddenly realized this and quickly said to Ludwig, "Put the mushroom away first.

"Give it to me, I'll put it in the Traveler's Bag."

Ludwig immediately clenched his fist.

He shook his head while stuffing the mushroom into his coat pocket, as if it were a little hamster, his pet.

Jenna didn't have any intention of forcibly taking away the jellyfish-like mushroom. She held Ludwig's hand and quickly walked towards the exit of Mushu Hospital.

Only now did she have the energy to think about what had just happened.

Li Keji's jellyfish-like mushroom actually fell into the hands of that person wrapped in white bandages, and that person even gave the mushroom to us...

Right, Lumian mentioned that after his colleagues Old Wang and Old Ding were struck by lightning, they now have this scary appearance. When he came to visit Mushu Hospital last time, Old Wang seemed to be asking him for help... This time at the entrance of the basement of Mushu Hospital, he encountered Old Ding again...

Was Old Ding hinting at him to pay attention to the 'no entry to unauthorized personnel' sign at that time?

Was it Old Wang or Old Ding who threw down the mushroom just

now? If it was Old Ding, it would make sense, as he was there when Li Keji was sent to the basement for 'treatment'...
But if he could stay in the basement for so long, it means he's no longer an unauthorized personnel...
What exactly do the current Old Wang and Old Ding symbolize in the dream city?
Why are they helping us?
I wonder if this dried mushroom is Li Keji's final product...
Amid these thoughts, Jenna took Ludwig back to Room 2303 of Building 5 in Dechuang Garden by taxi. She told Franca about their encounter and asked Ludwig to take out the withered mushroom to show.
Franca gazed at the mushroom, pondered for a moment and said, "My spiritual intuition tells me that this should be the final version of the therapeutic mushroom created by Li Keji, but its specific effects are unknown. Even divination methods won't provide an answer."
This was not only because the treatment subject was An Xiaotian, but also because the mushroom itself was very special.
"Should I eat it now?" Ludwig asked eagerly.
He had an expression that suggested the finest ingredient should be cooked in the simplest way.
Eating it raw!
Franca and Jenna exchanged glances before saying, "Wait until your godfather returns before eating it."
It wasn't that they weren't worried about changes happening to the mushroom in the next dozen or so hours, but the current situation was indeed not suitable for such a stimulating "experiment".
At present, Lumian and Anthony were outside the dream, Lumina had been frightened and needed close monitoring, and Franca herself couldn't withstand major accidents and couldn't attempt anything too risky. So, if Ludwig ate the mushroom now and something unexpected happened, the entire situation might collapse.
"Okay." Ludwig reluctantly stuffed the withered mushroom back into his pocket with some reluctance.
Jenna glanced towards the bedroom direction and asked Franca in a lowered voice, "How is Lumina doing?"
"Being 'inexplicably' arrested by the police, she was definitely shocked, has been somewhat dazed, and a bit overreactive. She only truly fell asleep two minutes before you returned to the dream," Franca answered softly.
She then said to Jenna, "You should go visit An Ruide now and

confirm his situation."
After Anthony was kicked out of the dream, Franca had actually been worried about his dream manifestation, An Ruide, but she was really too busy to observe and protect him—in the morning she had to take care of Ludwig and look after Luo Shan, in the afternoon she first went to Mushu Hospital to provide support, then was busy asking Queen Mystic to help bail out Lumina. She didn't even have time to care about Jenna's dream manifestation, let alone An Ruide.
"Alright." Jenna also had these concerns, but she had to prioritize finding the mushroom that Li Keji might have left behind.
Since returning to the dream city, she had been constantly on the move without rest.
...
At Xinhong District, in a rented apartment.
Jenna's figure emerged from a dark corner.
She looked towards the smallest bedroom closer to the kitchen and heard relatively long breaths.
Her spiritual intuition told her that the person sleeping inside was An Ruide.
Jenna relaxed a little and surveyed the situation in the room.
She saw a wine glass on the dining table, a plate with crumbs of salted crispy peanuts, a plate of unfinished cold sliced pork head meat, and a plate with only remnants of mashed potatoes.
This was consistent with An Ruide's cooking level.
Mashed potatoes were a delicacy both inside and outside the dream, while cold sliced pork head meat and salted crispy peanuts could be bought from street vendors outside.
A scene immediately appeared before Jenna's eyes: An Ruide was in a good mood, bought himself a bottle of wine, and had a couple of glasses with peanuts, pork head meat, and mashed potatoes. Afterwards, he was a bit tipsy and decided to clean up the dishes the next day.
He's quite leisurely; An Ruide knows how to enjoy life... Jenna silently marveled.
She then thought, Would An Ruide's character prototype—Anthony—also be like this in private, without the pressure of missions?
At this moment, Jenna felt that Anthony was no longer just the ever-calm Psychiatrist.
While marveling, she didn't let her guard down and quickly checked whether this situation was abnormal and whether the sleeping An Ruide in the room had any hidden issues.
After about seven or eight minutes, having sneaked into the corresponding bedroom twice, Jenna finally felt relieved and left.

...
The next morning.
After waking up, Jenna carefully got out of bed, afraid of disturbing Lumina beside her.
Unexpectedly, Lumina was a light sleeper. She immediately opened her eyes and turned her head.
Seeing it was Jenna, she visibly relaxed and revealed a still somewhat confused smile.
"I had a nightmare. I dreamed that I was arrested by the police. They said I committed murder and arson, spread cults, and did all kinds of evil..."
At this point, Lumina suddenly froze.
Soon, she propped herself up and muttered, "Nana, I was really arrested yesterday.
"I'm innocent! I just performed magic at the hot pot restaurant, and they said I killed someone!"
Seeing this, Jenna placed her knee on the edge of the bed, bent her back, and gave Lumina a warm hug.
"It's okay, you're out now.
"Later, there will be top lawyers to help you. The innocent will be cleared."
Franca, who had slept on the carpet last night and only came in when she heard the commotion, almost couldn't help laughing at Jenna's words.
The innocent will be cleared?
There was nothing wrong with this sentence, but we really did kill Zaratulstra—we're as guilty as can be!
She held back her laughter and joined in comforting Lumina.
After a while, Lumina calmed down. She looked at Jian Na and Luo Fu, furtively glanced left and right, and said in a lowered voice, "I didn't mention any of you at the police station."
She had a "Aren't I great and clever?" expression on her face.
"Great job!" Franca and Jenna very cooperatively praised her.
Seeing that Lumina's mood had improved considerably, Franca took the opportunity to tell her, "Miss Huang will come to pick you up later. You'll stay at her place for the next couple of days."
To prevent Lumina from implicating Franca and Jenna, when Queen Mystic hired a lawyer to bail her out, she had actually provided a new residence. But because Queen Mystic had to prepare for the matter of banishing the mirrored Emperor Roselle last night and had no time to look after Lumina, Franca, worried that Lumina might wander off, still took the risk of bringing her back and holding out for one night.
Now, Queen Mystic finally had time.

And by the afternoon, Lumian would return to the dream city.
"Mm-hmm." Lumina nodded obediently.
After Lumina was picked up by Queen Mystic, Jenna left for work at Hall Film Company. Anthony, who had returned to the dream, took on the responsibility of looking after Ludwig, and Franca finally had some free time. She took a taxi to the Tech Building, preparing to go through the resignation process.
For her, the process wasn't important; what was important was getting the salary for the half month she had worked!
In the Human Resources Department.
Perhaps because Miss Huang had given a heads up, Franca didn't even have a chance to take out her materials like the family surgery notice with the official stamp from Zhenjinqiao. She quickly went through the process without anyone giving her a hard time.
Finally, she took the certificate given by the HR department and went to the Finance Department to settle her wages.
After various deductions, she received 3,500 yuan.
Not bad... The first salary from a formal job in my life, although it's in a dream... With self-mockery, Franca left the Finance Department.
She planned to say goodbye to Luo Shan in the Administration Department and then leave the Tech Building, completely hiding in the shadows.
Just as she passed the Tech Department, not yet near the Administration Department, Franca, still wearing those old-fashioned black-framed glasses, suddenly heard a voice.
"Luo Fu."
Franca instinctively turned around and saw Zhou Mingrui coming out of the Tech Department.
"What a coincidence, I heard you're resigning?" Zhou Mingrui asked with concern.
Franca noticed a hint of determination in Zhou Mingrui's eyes, as if he had made up his mind to do something.
He's not going to ask about what happened at Mushu Hospital the night before last, is he? He's not going to ask about my real purpose for coming to the company, is he? Franca suddenly shuddered.
Oh no, I don't dare say anything now!

Chapter 1022: Preparations in Full Swing

"Yes, there's been an issue at home," Franca first answered Zhou Mingrui's question, then had a quick idea and hurriedly said, "I'm going to find Luo Shan. Once I've dealt with the family issue, I'll treat you all to a meal and we can have a good chat."

She emphasized the words "good chat."

Zhou Mingrui looked at Luo Fu for a few seconds, as if weighing his options.

Finally, he nodded and said, "Alright, we'll talk another day."

He could tell that Luo Fu didn't want to say much right now, and seemed to be afraid of something unknown.

Franca quietly let out a sigh of relief and waved sincerely. "See you again!"

After turning around, she muttered silently with relief, Thankfully Zhou Mingrui isn't one of those "stubborn" types people in Yangdu talk about. He can read others' expressions and listen to what they're saying!

...

Hall Film Company, Talent Department.

During a break in her physical training class, Jenna walked out of the classroom and turned towards the public restrooms.

On the way, she encountered Jiang Yue, who was responsible for her and the other new talents.

Seeing Jiang Yue busy there, she asked curiously, "What are you busy with?"

"The summer season is ending, 'The Great Pirate 3' is about to finish its run. We need to prepare for the celebration party, subsequent development, and a series of other things," Jiang Yue looked up and saw it was Jenna, her attitude fairly friendly.

The Great Pirate 3 is about to finish its run? Jenna was stunned for a moment.

Based on the common knowledge she had learned since entering the dream city, she thought this was a very normal thing, but it also felt ill-timed.

When Lumian returns to the dream, they were planning to try letting Ludwig eat that dried mushroom to see if he could gain special healing abilities to awaken the vegetative An Xiaotian. And An Xiaotian was related to the Gehrman Sparrow direction they were pursuing.

At this crucial stage, 'The Great Pirate 3', which further shaped Gehrman Sparrow's character and gave him widespread exposure, was about to completely end its run?

Did this hide some kind of symbolism?

Jenna chose her words carefully and asked casually, "Is the stage play for The Great Pirate 3 about to be officially scheduled?"
"Yes, you might be able to try your luck then. Who knows, you might get an important role," Jiang Yue hinted to Jenna.
...
In a spacious, bright, modern-styled apartment.
Bernadette had just entered when she saw Lumina reclining on the bay window, leaning against a pillow, basking in sunlight, leisurely reading a book in her hands.
"What are you reading?" Bernadette walked over and asked casually.
"A romance novel, one of those melodramatic ones." Lumina closed the book, looking a bit embarrassed.
She tried to explain, "I might be put in prison later. I've checked, most of the books there are for learning. I should read some leisure books while I still can!"
Bernadette looked out the window.
"You probably won't be sentenced. You really didn't do what they're accusing you of.
"Why don't you go out for some activity? It's windy today, not too hot."
"I went jogging in the community this morning," Lumina jumped down from the bay window, smiling as she flexed her arm, showing off her not-so-obvious biceps. "I love exercising."
At this point, she suddenly became a bit emotional.
"My mom has always been in poor health, and so was I when I was little. Maybe it's hereditary. So, they always didn't let me do intense exercise, didn't let me run around and play rough with my classmates...
"Later, when I became an adult, I rebelled. I often went running, cycling, playing badminton, and so on without telling them. And nothing bad happened!"
"When you grow up, you can do what you want." Queen Mystic seemed to feel something too.
Lumina's gaze gradually became unfocused, her eyes reflecting the brilliant sunlight outside the window.
"But now, I want them to restrict me again..."
Bernadette fell silent as well.
By the afternoon, Lumian had returned to the dream city.
The first thing he did was not to look at Queen Mystic Bernadette sitting on the single sofa to the side, but to check his own condition.
Queen Mystic calmly said, "After being kicked out of the dream twice, there will be several major restrictions when you come back

in:
"First, you can't display Beyonder powers or obvious hostility in front of other dream manifestations, especially the Celestial Worthy's subordinates. That will also lead to you being kicked out;
"Second, some hints that wouldn't have gotten you kicked out before will now attract the Celestial Worthy's attention;
"Third, you being kicked out will implicate the outsiders around you."
Lumian already knew about these restrictions from the information provided by the Major Arcana card holders. He chuckled. "Quite troublesome."
Queen Mystic nodded slightly. "I've transferred that 500,000 to your bank card. We'll take action this afternoon. We can't wait until dark."
"Alright," Lumian stood up, "I'll go rent an item first."
...
Star Dream Provisions Store.
Lumian, in his Demoness of Despair state, walked to the checkout counter and politely said to the shopkeeper.
"I'd like to rent an item."
"Which one?" the shopkeeper raised her head and asked as the sky suddenly darkened.
Lumian thought for two seconds, and instead of answering, he asked, "Do you have any recommendations?"
He wanted to test if the shopkeeper of Star Dream Provisions Store would give any hints.
"That depends on your own needs," the beautiful shopkeeper answered with a smile.
No hints possible? Lumian looked towards the shelves, his gaze slowly scanning over mystical items like the magic mirror Arrodes, the brass book, the quill pen, and others.
In less than a minute, he made up his mind.
"I'll rent that mirror again."
If it was purely for dealing with and constraining the mirrored Emperor Roselle, he would have chosen that brass book based on the brief description from the Major Arcana card holders. But tomorrow he still wanted to try weakening the Celestial Worthy and awakening Mr. Fool.
And that magic mirror's creation was related to the original God Almighty, having its own hidden aspects. Moreover, it was the only Sealed Artifact Mr. Fool carried with him, likely to play an important role in weakening the Celestial Worthy and awakening Mr. Fool!
Its history and the treatment it received were incomparable to

other items!
The shopkeeper's smile remained the same as before. "Alright, how many days do you want to rent it for?"
"One day," Lumian answered without hesitation.
He had enough cash on hand to rent the magic mirror Arrodes for two days, but considering that his guesses, ideas, and action plans might not be necessarily correct, and the final result might not be as he expected, and after today, Queen Mystic would likely be completely kicked out of the dream, making it difficult for the team to encounter such a generous "patron" again, he deliberately left some money for Franca, Jenna, and Anthony.
This way, even if tomorrow's operation failed, causing him to be kicked out of the dream for the third time, the remaining people would still have money to continue making new attempts.
The shopkeeper didn't say anything, took out a POS machine, let Lumian swipe his card, and sign the contract.
After walking out of Star Dream Provisions Store with the magic mirror Arodes, Lumian's phone suddenly rang.
It was an unfamiliar number.
After using the Information Shredder to delete his contacts, all numbers were unfamiliar to him.
Lumian chose to answer and heard an annoyed voice from the other end.
"Why didn't you come for the night shift last night?
"Don't you know to apply for leave in advance? This is called absenteeism!"
So it's a call from the Intis Group... Lumian quickly switched to a male voice.
"I quit!
"Do whatever you want!"
The person on the other end was speechless for a moment, then after a few seconds said, "You don't want your last month's salary?"
"Donate it to those in need, thank you!" Lumian hung up the phone with a bang.
He then got into Miss Huang's car parked by the roadside.
Queen Mystic said while driving, "Later I'll be responsible for clinging on to her, getting kicked out of the dream together. You just need to hide in the shadows, guarding against her leaving the corresponding area in advance."
For this operation, except for Jenna who couldn't get away from Hall Film Company, Lumian, Franca, Anthony, and Ludwig would all participate.
Among them, Lumian would play the role that Queen Mystic had

when dealing with Zaratulstra, not directly appearing but interfering and exerting influence from the shadows. Franca would decide whether to confront directly based on the specific situation, with Anthony assisting her.
If they could bring some despair to the mirrored Emperor Roselle, it would greatly help Franca digest the Despair potion.
"Do I need to ask the magic mirror some questions?" Lumian cautiously confirmed.
He felt that the core of Queen Mystic's plan was to use the rule that "the third kick-out will implicate surrounding outsiders".
"No need, I already know everything I need to know," Queen Mystic then told Lumian the relevant information.
She finally warned, "You can't hide behind mirrors later. She has much stronger control over the world in the mirror than you do."
"Understood," Lumian had confirmed this point when monitoring Zaratulstra.
In the time that followed, he didn't act humble or polite, but discussed the specific details of the plan with Queen Mystic and proposed some modifications.
...
In a palace-like villa.
After asking the butler, Bernadette took the elevator to the fourth floor and walked towards her father's study.
The CEO, Mr. Huang Tao, had gone to the company for a while in the morning and returned home at noon.
Arriving outside the study, Bernadette habitually raised her right hand and knocked on the door.
When she was young, she was spoiled at home and would open any door she wanted without ever asking if the person inside agreed to her entering. But after accidentally witnessing a few things she shouldn't have seen, she learned to knock.
"Come in." Huang Tao's voice came from inside the study.
Bernadette turned the handle and walked into the sunlit study, seeing her father standing by the window, gazing at something unknown.
This suddenly gave her a feeling of returning to the past.
Back then, she didn't understand why her father always gazed out of the west-facing floor-to-ceiling window, sometimes even holding her as a child while doing so.
"Dad..." Bernadette instinctively called out.
Huang Tao turned around, revealing a smile. "You came at just the right time."
"Why do you say that?" Bernadette immediately raised her guard.
Huang Tao smiled and said, "I'm going to leave this place."

"..." Bernadette frowned, "What do you mean?"
Huang Tao sighed with a smile. "How could I let my princess be in a difficult position?"
Wh— Bernadette understood her father's meaning and was a bit stunned.
Huang Tao looked at Bernadette for a couple of seconds, then smiled with both satisfaction and emotion.
"I'm very glad that you hesitated for several days."

Chapter 1023: Three Sentences

When she heard Huang Tao's emotional and gratified remarks, Queen Mystic Bernadette's lips moved almost imperceptibly a few times, but in the end she didn't speak.

She pressed her lips tightly together.

Huang Tao's gaze looked out towards the open door and the corridor outside. He smiled slightly and said, "Before I leave, I'll give you all a gift."

As soon as he finished speaking, all the mirrors in the study lit up with a clear radiance.

Huang Tao's figure instantly disappeared from where he had been standing.

Trying to run? Franca, who was hidden in the shadows of the corridor in an Invisible state, instinctively rushed out.

She suspected that the mirrored Roselle had deliberately appealed to emotions just now, preventing Queen Mystic from reacting immediately, allowing Him to escape using the mirror world.

The next second, Franca, still in her Invisible state, saw Bernadette transform into ethereal and complex information, rushing like a torrent into the mirror in front of her.

Queen Mystic closely pursued the mirrored Emperor Roselle.

Franca didn't hesitate. She reached out her right palm and pressed towards that mirror from a distance.

Her body suddenly leaned forward, quickly becoming ethereal, and passed through the glass mirror surface.

Anthony, who had snuck in using Psychological Invisibility, quickly ran into the study. Then Lumian, who had directly teleported over while holding Ludwig's hand, grabbed his shoulder and brought him into the mirror world.

They followed the traces left behind by the mirrored Emperor Roselle, constantly moving forward through deep tunnels spread like spider webs in the ethereal darkness.

They pursued like this for several dozen seconds. The tunnels around them gradually became sparser, the darkness growing ever deeper.

Finally, the mirrored Emperor Roselle in Huang Tao's form stopped and turned around.

He was positioned at the edge of an area of void and deep darkness, but behind Him there were no more tunnels, only pure, profound darkness remaining.

In the depths of that darkness, faint gray fog could vaguely be seen spreading, with an endless city hidden in the mist, like a mirage, yet indistinct.

Thump, thump!
Bernadette, Lumian, Franca and the others heard the sound of heartbeats. It seemed to be both their own and also coming from the very bottom of that deep darkness.
"There are some things that can be said now," said the mirrored Emperor Roselle in Huang Tao's form, smiling again.
One more step back and He would retreat into that pure, deep darkness.
"What things?" Bernadette's voice was a bit lower and hoarser than before.
Huang Tao smiled and said, "The gift is three sentences.
"First, I have preliminarily achieved my purpose for entering this real dream, in every aspect."
As He said this, the mirrored Roselle was gazing at Queen Mystic Bernadette. The subtext seemed to be saying: my greatest purpose was to find an opportunity to truly spend a few days with my princess as father and daughter.
Bernadette fell silent.
But Lumian was thinking.
The purposes in every aspect have been achieved?
The task given by the one worshiped by the Aurora Order has been completed, and the one given by the Celestial Worthy has also been completed?
What could that be?
The mirrored Emperor Roselle seemed to guess what Lumian, Franca and Anthony were thinking, and laughed, saying, "It's the same as what you're thinking."
Before Lumian and the others could ask further, Huang Tao, with a somewhat complex expression, said to Queen Mystic Bernadette, "The second sentence: It is possible for people inside and outside the mirror to merge."
Hearing this, Lumian and Franca both suddenly remembered something Krismona had said to Jenna: Reconcile with your mirror self!
Is this a different expression of the same idea? It doesn't seem so—reconciliation isn't the same as merging... When Lumian looked towards Franca in front of him, he found she was also looking at him.
Bernadette remained silent, not responding to the mirrored Roselle's words.
Huang Tao sighed with a smile, "The last sentence: The apocalypse may come earlier than prophesied. Be prepared."
After saying this, He looked at Bernadette and said in a joking tone, "There are five Four Heavenly Kings, and four sentences in three

sentences. It's very reasonable.
"There's one more sentence..."
The mirrored Emperor Roselle paused for a moment, then smiled tenderly at Queen Mystic.
"These past few days, dad has been very happy, truly.
"Remember, I will never put you in a difficult position..."
Bernadette opened her mouth, but still didn't speak.
As Huang Tao spoke, He retreated into the pure darkness outside the current area.
His body rapidly changed, transforming from a fashionable middle-aged man into an alluring woman with long chestnut hair, blue eyes, a high nose bridge, thin lips, a voluptuous figure, and a mature aura.
The dream's repulsive force suddenly descended upon Her, seemingly triggered by Her entry into the deep darkness of this part of the mirror world.
The mirrored Emperor Roselle maintained a gentle smile and continued speaking to Bernadette, "I hate him very much, dislike him, but my feelings in other aspects are the same as his, even more extreme, more irrational.
"I've already left a lawyer-witnessed letter saying I'm going to travel freely for a while, indulge for a while, and that you'll handle various matters of the Intis Group on my behalf."
Without waiting for Bernadette to respond, She specially reminded, "You should all retreat further; otherwise, you'll also be affected and rejected by the dream."
Saying this, the mirrored Emperor Roselle looked at Lumian and smiled, saying, "We'll meet again. I've also left a gift for you in the desk drawer."
A gift? Feeling the dream's repulsive force spreading over, Lumian, Franca and the others quickly retreated into one of the mirror tunnels.
The mirrored Emperor Roselle's figure gradually faded, seeming both to dissolve into that deep darkness and to be pushed out of the dream by some force.
She smiled at Bernadette, who was still standing in place. "Quickly leave this area."
Bernadette instinctively stepped back, her eyes already misty.
Suddenly, she hummed a melody, a melody very familiar to the mirrored Emperor Roselle.
The mirrored Roselle was stunned for a moment, becoming somewhat dazed.
Then, She began humming along, singing the lyrics corresponding to that melody.

"The stars in the sky don't speak, the babies on earth miss their mothers..."
Expressions of reminiscence, gratification, and emotion appeared on the mirrored Roselle's face. She persisted until Bernadette's figure disappeared into one of the mirror tunnels, only then giving up the resistance.
Her figure rapidly vanished, dissolving into the darkness.
The dream's repulsive force completely enveloped this area, only fully receding after several dozen seconds.
After a while, Bernadette, Lumian and the others returned here.
"She has indeed been permanently kicked out of the dream," said Queen Mystic in a low voice after looking around.
Smoother than I imagined... Lumian didn't say this out loud.
He felt it would upset Queen Mystic.
And for those in High-Sequence Beyonders, an emotional outburst had a potential hidden danger—the possibility of losing control.
Bernadette was silent for a moment, then took the initiative to say, "Any thoughts on those three sentences just now?"
Lumian had already analyzed. "The second sentence, about the possibility of merging between the original body and the Mirror Person, likely has exaggerated and false components.
"The third sentence aligns with some of my thoughts and guesses. It might not be false—the apocalypse may really come early.
"For the first sentence, I'm inclined to believe it's true."
"So She also completed the task given by the Celestial Worthy?" Franca asked with considerable worry.
She immediately guessed, "These past few days, when we weren't paying attention, did She do something to Zhou Mingrui, laying the groundwork?"
"No," Bernadette slowly shook her head, "These past few days, I've been watching her openly and secretly. She shouldn't have had the chance to directly contact Zhou Mingrui."
Lumian, looking at the pure darkness outside the area and the faintly visible gray fog and city in the depths of the darkness, said thoughtfully,
"Perhaps Her existence itself has some symbolism, enabling Her to complete the task given by the Celestial Worthy."
Before Franca and the others could ask, he pointed to the depths of the darkness and said,
"Doesn't that look like the sealed Fourth Epoch Trier?"
Franca vaguely grasped Lumian's idea and blurted out. "A special mirror world?"
Lumian nodded slightly and said to Queen Mystic,
"Mr. Fool's dream originally shouldn't have contained the sealed

Fourth Epoch Trier and the special mirror world that's produced from attaching to the Fourth Epoch Trier."
This was deduced from Mr. Fool's experiences.
Lumian continued, "But after the mirrored Emperor Roselle entered, Her essence and special nature gave Her corresponding symbolic meaning. So, in the depths of the dream city's mirror world, that special mirror world and the sealed Fourth Epoch Trier gradually took shape.
"And we previously speculated that one of Zaratulstra's main goals was to have Zhou Mingrui drink the Witch potion, producing a stable, long-term, corresponding Mirror Person. Then, the Celestial Worthy could use that Mirror Person to accomplish some things, achieving a phased victory."
Queen Mystic nodded slightly. "Apart from consuming the 'Witch' potion, another way to make a person produce a stable, long-term Mirror Person is to come into contact with that special mirror world."
"Zaratulstra was both looking for opportunities to induce Zhou Mingrui's advancement himself and introducing the mirrored Emperor Roselle so as to bring the special mirror world? A two-pronged approach!" Franca drew in a sharp breath.
Queen Mystic said in a somewhat low voice, "Zhou Mingrui probably hasn't come into contact with the special mirror world yet, hasn't produced a corresponding Mirror Person, but afterwards, the Celestial Worthy's side will certainly have corresponding arrangements."
For example, achieving it through Zhou Sasa? Franca suddenly looked at Lumian.
Lumian nodded and continued, "So, we can't delay our actions.
"We are on the precipice; there's no backing down."
"Yes," Franca agreed.
Returning to Huang Tao's study, Bernadette walked around behind the desk and, guided by spirituality, pulled open a drawer.
There was a "gift" left for Lumian by the mirrored Emperor Roselle.
Lumian, coming around from the other side, suddenly saw a card.
The card lay quietly on top of a stack of documents, its surface depicting the image of the mirrored Emperor Roselle from earlier.
Voluptuous figure, wearing a black dress, adorned with a golden crown inlaid with jewels, alluring features, mature aura, outstanding charm.
In the upper left corner of this card, a line of text was condensed from brilliant starlight: "Sequence 0: Primordial Demoness"
At this moment, Bernadette's voice rang out, echoing in the ears of Lumian and the others, "A Card of Blasphemy, the Demoness card."

Chapter 1024: A Blurry Ritual

A Card of Blasphemy?

A Card of Blasphemy representing a path to godhood, created by Emperor Roselle based on the second Blasphemy Slate and His personal experience? Lumian and Franca were both shocked.

They had learned about the Cards of Blasphemy from Emperor Roselle's diary and various mystical knowledge they had collected through different μα channels. But items of this level naturally possessed anti-prophecy and anti-divination properties, so they had only heard about them and never seen one with their own eyes.

Now, the Demoness card appeared before them.

This was a gift left for Lumian by the mirrored Emperor Roselle!

In a flash, Lumian instinctively had a thought.

Is She really being so kind?

At this moment, Queen Mystic spoke again, "It's real."

"A real Card of Blasphemy, a real Demoness card?" Franca curiously leaned in, examining this long- coveted item.

Lumian remained silent for a few seconds, then chuckled and reached out to take the Demoness card.

He had already accrued so many "debts" and had so many "creditors", what was one more!

Queen Mystic looked at the Card of Blasphemy in Lumian's hand and said after a moment of silence, "The activation incantation should be my name, inept ancient Feysac."

Name... Lumian chanted in a low voice, "Bernadette."

Instantly, the Demoness card generated an invisible vortex, frantically drawing in Lumian's spirit and spirituality.

Soon, the Demoness card became three-dimensional, transforming into a miniature book.

The book opened naturally, revealing a Roselle dressed as an Assassin's Creed character, a clean-shaven male Roselle.

Next to this character image was a corresponding description in ancient Feysac:

"Sequence 9, Assassin.

"Every Assassin possesses the ability to change their body for a short time, gaining feather-like lightness to perform a Leap of Faith, and has eagle-like vision and night vision, excelling in combat, evasion, and concealment.

"Shadows are their friends and their camouflage. Once they leave the shadows, they use their agile footwork to gather all their strength for a fatal strike on their target...

"Potion formula...."

Lumian reached out to touch the Card of Blasphemy that had become a miniature book, watching it continuously flip pages, seeing Emperor Roselle's image change from male to female, becoming increasingly beautiful and alluring, gradually "overlapping" with the appearance of the mirrored Roselle.
Finally, an image of the mirrored Emperor Roselle, seemingly much younger and resembling a young girl, appeared before Lumian's eyes.
The corresponding information was also revealed:
"Sequence 3: Unaging (Demoness of Unaging).
"Every Demoness of Unaging is forever youthful, skilled in resurrection, bizarrely difficult to kill, a darling of the mirror world, a true Gorgon...
"Potion formula:
"Main ingredients: One heart of a Mirror God, a pair of Gorgon eyes;
"Supplementary ingredients: Nine Mirror God fragments, 80 ml of Gorgon blood, an antique mirror over 500 years old with a corresponding mirror realm, 22 drops of water from a drowned person's lungs;
"Ritual: Find your mirror self, enslave them solely with your own power, or make them truly infatuated with you, or reconcile with them."
Seeing this, Lumian and Franca once again recalled Krismona's mention of "reconciling with your mirror self."
Will different handling methods result in different manifestations later? Lumian pondered for a while, then turned to the next page:
"Sequence 2: Catastrophe (Demoness of Catastrophe).
"Demonesses of Catastrophe bring various natural disasters such as blizzards, floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, meteor strikes, etc. Everyone who mentions their names feels fear from the bottom of their hearts...
"Potion formula...
"Ritual: As a participant, cause a disaster affecting the entire continent, and advance during the disaster."
Lumian didn't read the specific formula in detail, just skimmed the Sequence name and corresponding ritual.
He turned to the next page:
"Sequence 1: Apocalypse (Demoness of Apocalypse)".
...
"Ritual: Advance at the universally acknowledged end of an epoch or the beginning of the next; advance during the signs and process of the apocalypse's arrival; advance when one's own involvement leads to the fall of a deity.

"Any one of the three rituals is effective."
According to the mirrored Emperor Roselle's words and my deductions, the apocalypse will come early.... Disasters frequently occur during the apocalypse, which indeed suits Demonesses...
Lumian unconsciously held his breath and turned the Card of Blasphemy to the last page:
"Sequence 0: Demoness (Primordial Demoness, Chaos Demoness)
"The source of catastrophes, symbol of the apocalypse, the Demoness who wields chaos, ruler of the mirror world, corresponding to the feminine aspect of the Original Creator.
"Potion formula:
"Ingredients: Demoness Uniqueness, three Demoness of Apocalypse Beyonder characteristics...
"Ritual..."
Lumian wanted to see what the apotheosis ritual for the Demoness pathway was, but found that the corresponding text was blurry and unclear, as if obscured by some force.
Did the mirrored Emperor Roselle do this when leaving this gift, or was it like this when She obtained this Demoness card? Lumian turned his head to look at Queen Mystic.
"Your Highness, can you see the content of the apotheosis ritual clearly?"
Bernadette stared for a moment, then slowly shook her head.
"The power obscuring the corresponding content is of a very high level, at least Sequence 0."
Lumian and Franca exchanged glances but didn't pursue the matter further.
For them, the apotheosis ritual was a distant matter. They should focus on the Demoness of Unaging first.
"Since I wasn't kicked out of the dream, I can also participate in your operation tomorrow," Queen Mystic said in a somewhat low voice, looking towards the window area where Huang Tao had been standing earlier.
"Thank you," Lumian said without being polite.
He put the Demoness card into his Traveler's Bag.
...
When Lumian and the others returned to Xinhong District, the sunlight was still bright, and it wasn't even afternoon tea time yet.
"Should we let Ludwig eat that mushroom now?"
Franca pulled out a chair and sat down, asking with a mix of nervousness and curiosity. Lumian thought for a few seconds, then said with a smile, "Yes."
"But you should leave first, go back to Dechuang Garden. I'm afraid your life might be ended by the mutation brought by the

mushroom."
This wasn't saying that the mushroom could directly harm Franca, but that the corresponding mutation might be very extreme, drawing the Celestial Worthy's attention, which would be completely unbearable for Franca, who hadn't fully digested the Despair potion.
"Alright." Franca suppressed her inner emotions and returned to Dechuang Garden through the mirror world.
Only then did Lumian sit down in the chair Franca had just pulled out and say to Ludwig. "You can eat it now."
Ludwig had been holding back for a long time and quickly took out the dried jellyfish-like mushroom.
Seeing this, Lumian turned his head to Anthony and said, "Pay attention to placating his mind and emotions."
"Okay," Anthony's eyes became vertical, reflecting Ludwig's figure in that pale golden color.
Ludwig swallowed and looked at the mushroom with a hint of fear as he stuffed it into his mouth.
He chewed it up, then swallowed it with satisfaction.
Lumian and Anthony's spirits instantly tensed to the extreme.
As time passed second by second, Ludwig finally opened his mouth and evaluated the changes after eating it.
"I can create a kind of spore that enters the human body, repairing nerves and flesh, merging with spirituality and soul.
"This might wake up people in vegetative states, but the condition of patients after merging with the spores is currently unknown..."
As Ludwig spoke, Lumian and Anthony saw masses of flesh writhing under his skin, sometimes bulging the skin outwards, sometimes sinking inwards.
This made Ludwig look like he was wearing a skin suit.
Suddenly, the skin on his neck split open, and a wet brown mushroom grew out of the flesh.
Ludwig raised his right hand nonchalantly, plucked off this mushroom with a snap, and stuffed it into his mouth, chewing and swallowing it.
The wound on his neck quickly healed.
And so, mushrooms intermittently grew out of Ludwig's body, sometimes of the same species, sometimes different, and he plucked them all off, using them as snacks.
This formed a strange balance.
"Can eating these mushrooms make you full?" Lumian asked curiously, secretly breathing a sigh of relief.
Ludwig glanced at his godfather, "Can you get full by sucking your own fingers?"

Lumian and Anthony immediately understood the answer.
Anthony then looked at Lumian. "Should we take him to Red Moon Hospital now to try and treat An Xiaotian?"
Lumian pondered for several minutes before answering, "There's no rush. Let's wait until tomorrow, when we officially take action."
Anthony didn't hide his confusion, but seeing that Lumian didn't explain further, he calmly closed his mouth.
If he's not saying, there must be a reason for not saying it.
...
The next morning.
Lumian stood on the balcony of the master bedroom, gazing at the tree-lined internal roads of the community and the slowly passing electric cars and bicycles.
After a while, he reluctantly withdrew his gaze, walked into the living room, and placed the magic mirror Arrodes on the dining table.
After the previous rental, they had figured out the rules for using this magic mirror:
Only three questions could be asked within 24 hours, and they could be asked at intervals.
Lumian looked at the silver mirror with ancient patterns and a black gemstone on each side, and calmly said in the presence of Anthony and Ludwig. "Great Arrodes, I want to ask you a question, the first question of today."
The surface of the ancient silver mirror suddenly darkened, and lines of blood-red ancient Feysac words appeared: "I can answer any question you ask, but you must also answer an equal number of questions from me, in the presence of at least one witness.
"If you refuse to answer, or if you lie, you will face punishment."
Lumian nodded and revealed a bright smile. "My question is, is it a coincidence that the Celestial Worthy's attempt to use the Mirror People and your birth as a mirror occurred at the same time?"
On the magic mirror, the blood-red words quickly lost their color and contracted into a single, lonely word:
"No."
***

Chapter 1025: Sudden Event

Not a coincidence, so it was intentional? Did the original God Almighty see a certain scene while dying and disintegrating, and make corresponding arrangements? Lumian revealed a thoughtful expression.

He immediately said in a satisfied tone, "Thank you for your answer, great Arrodes."

This was the answer he wanted.

This also indirectly confirmed that the Celestial Worthy was trying to use the Mirror People.

The surface of the magic mirror rippled, and blood-red ancient Feysac words were outlined again:

"Based on the principle of reciprocity, it's my turn to ask a question.

"If you answer incorrectly or lie, you will be punished."

Lumian nodded slightly, then saw the ancient Feysac words on the old silver mirror change:

"Are you prepared to be scared out of your wits by that individual?"

What a gentle question, not embarrassing at all... Anthony thought instinctively.

Then, he realized, This seems more like a hint.

A hint to Lumian that the upcoming action might directly face the Celestial Worthy or His consciousness and power?

"I'm ready." Lumian answered with a smile, He also noticed the hint from the magic mirror Arrodes.

Then, he faced the magic mirror, pressed his hand to his chest and said, "I'll ask the other two questions later."

By eleven in the morning, Franca and Jenna had also arrived at the rental house in Xinhong District, each finding a chair to sit on.

"Queen Mystic is maintaining the illusion of Lumiana, preventing the police from discovering that I've left my designated residence," said Lumian, who had resumed his Li Ming identity. He stood up and looked at each companion, "We need to hurry now."

"Okay," Franca had been curious about Lumian's plan since yesterday.

Of course, she inevitably felt a bit nervous and uneasy, because if others falled, they would most likely just be kicked out of the dream, while she had a significant chance of dying.

Lumian smiled and said, "I've been pondering the phrase 'filter out the interference of complex information and see the most fundamental facts' all day yesterday, and finally thought of a few details.

"One of them is that Chief Yagates only has the spiritual imprints

of Mr. Door and the Celestial Worthy, with maybe a little bit of Amon's at most.
"If interfered with by complex information, one might deduce that Chief Yagates would likely lean towards the Celestial Worthy at crucial moments, or that he has always been feigning neutrality, and we must avoid encountering him.
"But I did stimulate Mr. Door's spiritual imprint with matters related to the Abraham family and our purpose for entering the dream city, preventing me from being completely kicked out of the dream.
"Moreover, the official forces of the dream city have indeed shown neutrality before, being impartial and following the law, otherwise we would have been finished long ago.
"So, what is the most fundamental fact among this information?"
Franca, Jenna, and Anthony fell into thought, while Ludwig continued to noisily eat from a large bag of chips, occasionally plucking a mushroom from his body to go with it.
After about ten seconds, Jenna said in a quiet voice, filled with doubt and uncertainty. "The Celestial Worthy is too weak?"
Lumian chuckled. "Correct. Unlike Amon, Mr. Door passed away long ago. On Chief Yagates, who is the Uniqueness of the Door pathway, there exists only His remaining spiritual imprint, without external help or subsequent replenishment.
"And it's this remnant imprint, along with a bit of Mr. Fool's cognition and a little of Amon's spiritual imprint, that has managed to resist the spiritual imprint of the Celestial Worthy, this great existence, maintaining balance most of the time and even gaining the upper hand when stimulated occasionally.
"What does this signify?
"It indicates that the Celestial Worthy's current state is much worse than we imagined, and the limitations He's under are far greater than what we see daily!
"This is the most fundamental fact.
"And why is this so?"
At this point, Lumian closed his mouth, clearly not wanting to share his speculations and thoughts.
Hey, you're just going to pique our curiosity and not say anything? Franca felt uncomfortable all over, just like encountering certain authors and storytellers who leave a cliffhanger at the end of a chapter.
But she immediately understood Lumian's intention, which was based on complete trust.
"Some things can be known but not spoken, at most hinted at?" Franca asked carefully.

Lumian showed an expression of satisfaction that made Franca want to hit him.
"Didn't we already conclude earlier that except for outsiders, every manifestation in the dream city is a product of the subconscious cognition of Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy combined?"
Lumian extended his right hand, pointing at the green trees outside the window, at the surrounding walls, at the hot wind blowing in from outside.
"What I want to say is, apart from the dream characters, the birds, rats, cockroaches, earthworms, plants, buildings, and even the air in this city are all products of Mr. Fool's subconscious and the Celestial Worthy's subconscious combined.
"In other words, we've been living in the thoughts, cognition, and consciousness of Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy all along."
Franca was enlightened. "So the dream city is like the cerebral cortex, with some areas very active that we need to carefully avoid and not stimulate, like Zhou Mingrui's dream manifestation, while most other areas are in a dormant state and normally won't react unless we say key words or key information?"
"Once spoken, it's likely to be immediately noticed by the Celestial Worthy." Lumian raised his right hand and grabbed a handful of air.
With a mischievous grin, he remarked, "This not only brings attention and rejection but might also stimulate the Celestial Worthy, allowing Him to break free from His current unfavorable state.
"Let me give an example. The fundamental facts revealed by the information on Chief Yagates aren't that hard to figure out, but even with Amon's reminders and hints, it took me a long time to understand, and you and the Major Arcana card holders haven't even thought of it.
"Suppose there's a person who's been fooled, always feeling weak and unable to break free from certain limitations. In this situation, if someone suddenly tells him he's silly or stupid, wouldn't that stimulate him to regain clarity and become powerful again?
"This is also why Amon and that individual related to the Aurora Order don't speak directly in and out of dreams, only hinting, letting us understand on our own.
"Some tricks no longer work once the key technique is revealed!"
Jenna finally understood what Lumian was trying to express.
There were two layers to this:
First, everyone who has entered the dream is essentially receiving joint corruption from Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy. It's just that due to differences in dream entry time and actions taken, the

degree of corruption varies, and the corresponding influence will persist even after returning to reality.
Second, certain words and facts might stimulate the Celestial Worthy under similar corruption conditions, causing Him to "wake up".
"Just assign the tasks to us, you don't need to say anything else." Jenna said with a sigh.
Franca and Anthony also had some realizations and nodded in succession.
Just as Lumian was about to assign the corresponding tasks to his companions, Franca's phone suddenly rang.
Franca picked it up and looked, her expression changing slightly. "It's a call from Luo Shan!"
Has something become so urgent that it requires a phone call?
Franca chose to answer, trying to make her voice sound steady. "Hello, Shanshan?"
Luo Shan's urgent voice came through the receiver.
"Zhou Mingrui suddenly took leave, he asked for it twenty minutes ago, I just found out!"
Zhou Mingrul took leave? Jenna looked towards Lumian.
Lumian couldn't help but frown. Today is Wednesday, Zhou Mingrui's sister Zhou Sasa is arriving in Yangdu, but her high-speed train doesn't arrive until 1:40 pm. Zhou Mingrul doesn't need to take the morning off at all, he would have enough time even if he left after lunch.
Franca forced herself to stay calm and said to Luo Shan, "Don't panic, ask Zhou Mingrui on WeChat to see what happened."
"Right... I can ask him directly." Luo Shan, who was in the administrative department of the Intis Group, quickly hung up the phone.
She rapidly sent a message to Zhou Mingrui: "Why did you suddenly take leave?"
After a few minutes, while Luo Shan was silently praying, Zhou Mingrui replied to her message:
"Going to the high-speed rail station to pick up my sister."
"Your sister is coming to Yangdu? What time?" Luo Shan's heart tightened, as if glimpsing an unpleasant truth.
After nearly another minute, Zhou Mingrui sent a emoji: 😶💨
"She was originally supposed to arrive on the train after 1:30, but she said she got to her hometown's high-speed rail station early and there were spare tickets, so she changed her booking. She'll arrive just after 11:50."
Why did she suddenly change her booking? Almost two hours earlier... Luo Shan had heard from Luo Fu and Jian Na that there

might be issues with Zhou Sasa's arrival in Yangdu, and she immediately became more panicked.
She didn't bother to respond to Zhou Mingrui, quickly took a screenshot of the chat history, and sent it to True Hidden Blade.
At times like this, repeating is a waste of time!
Franca, in the rental house in Xinhong District, quickly scanned the information on the screenshot, and her whole body suddenly tensed up.
"Not good, Zhou Mingrui is almost at the high-speed rail station, and so is Zhou Sasa!" Franca held up her phone vertically, showing it to Lumian and the others.
Lumian glanced at it and smiled slightly. "No need to panic, there's still time. We have some redundancy."
His attitude infected Franca and Jenna, calming their mindset and spirits a little-Anthony and Ludwig didn't need reassuring.
Lumian then began assigning different tasks to each person, only telling them what to do, not why.
When assigning certain tasks, he even deliberately used the Bottle of Fiction, not letting the other companions hear.
Finally, Lumian said to Anthony, "Before taking Ludwig to Crimson Moon Hospital, make a trip back to the real world and relay what I told you to the Major Arcana card holders. Let them prepare, and when the dream city experiences anomalies, seize the brief window of opportunity to complete that matter.
"Of course, the anomalies may not occur, and our plan could very likely fail."
"Understood," Anthony replied steadily.
Lumian then turned his gaze to Franca, smiling again as he said, "Then let's split up and take action."
After saying this, he pressed his hand to his chest and said, "Praise The Fool!"
"Praise The Fool!" Franca stood up abruptly, returning the same gesture.
Then, she said in a deep voice, "You must all be careful..."
Lumian nodded lightly, and together with Jenna, walked towards the door and out of the rental house.
The operation had officially begun.

Chapter 1026: Helper

After Lumian, Jenna, and Franca had each left the rental house in Xinhong District, Anthony waited for a moment before saying to Ludwig, "Keep eating, I'm heading back to the real world for a bit."

"Mhm, mhm." Ludwig, mouth full of food, didn't have time to reply properly.

Anthony leaned back in his chair and closed his eyes.

As a Dreamwalker, he didn't need to perform any complicated actions to easily return to the real world.

Upon opening his eyes in a room of the luxurious Trier mansion, Anthony instinctively rolled out of bed.

At the same time, Madam Justice's voice echoed in his mind: "Come to Two of Cups's room."

Anthony immediately left his room and headed to Franca's bedroom, which was closer to the staircase. He lightly knocked on the wooden door.

"Come in." Madam Justice's gentle voice came from inside.

As soon as Anthony pushed open the door, he was met with multiple figures:

There was Mr. Star standing in front of the bright window, wearing red gloves; a man sitting in a dim corner, his eyes crimson and his chin slightly raised; a rugged-looking man with bronze skin and blue hair, leaning against the mini-bar, holding a glass of Lanti Proof;

On either side of the long sofa were Madam Magician and Madam Judgment; Ma'am Hermit was sitting on a single-seater, wearing glasses and flipping through a book; Madam Justice sat by Franca's bed with Susie nearby, and a young man, over two meters tall, with simple white robes, paced at the foot of the bed.

Anthony scanned the room and respectfully said, "Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen."

"Do you have something to tell us?" Madam Justice turned her body slightly.

Anthony repeated Lumian's instructions in full, without leaving out a single detail.

Madam Justice nodded thoughtfully. "I understand."

At that moment, the tall, brown-haired young man shifted his gaze to the other Major Arcana card holders and said in a calm voice, "From now on, no one is to leave this room."

As his voice echoed, the brilliant sunlight, brighter than the sky outside, flooded the bedroom, banishing all shadows and darkness, leaving no corner untouched.

...

Inside the administrative department of the Intis Group at the Tech Building.
"Haha, kids can be impulsive, Coming to Yangdu for y college?" Luo Shan sent Zhou Mingrui a message, holding her phone.
This was a continuation of their earlier conversation and also a way to "monitor" Zhou Mingrui's current state.
Luo Shan believed that chatting with Zhou Mingrui on and off would allow her to keep abreast of his movements in a timely manner.
While waiting for his reply, Luo Shan found herself unable to sit or stand still. She walked around but couldn't calm the waves of anxiety in her heart.
She sat back down, grabbed some paper and a pen, hoping to ease her complex, tangled emotions by drawing.
Scribble! Scribble! Scribble! Luo Shan scribbled on the paper aimlessly.
As time slowly passed, her sketch gradually took shape.
It depicted a girl, guarding behind a black barrier, fighting off childlike monsters.
Luo Shan had drawn a version of herself deep into the night, standing as a protector.
When she saw the half-finished drawing, Luo Shan froze.
After a few seconds, she pressed her lips tightly together.
She stood up abruptly and rushed to Deputy Director Zhang Qing's office, speaking urgently, "Director Zhang, I'd like to take half a day off!"
...
Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station, arrival level.
Lumian and Jenna stood in front of the large display screen, checking the exit for Zhou Sasa's train.
"South Exit Three, arriving in six minutes," Jenna said, referencing the Information Luo Shan had provided, locating the correct train.
"I told you we had extra time," Lumian, in his male form, chuckled and walked with Jenna toward South Exit Three.
They didn't get too close, keeping a distance of about twenty to thirty meters, hiding near the taxi lane entrance while watching the target area.
The two Demonesses quickly spotted Zhou Mingrui.
Because the Intis Group had strong air conditioning and he had rushed out in a hurry. Zhou Mingrui was wearing a white T-shirt under an orange-and-black plaid shirt, looking as if he had been waiting for a while.
Neither Jenna nor Lumian spoke, quietly observing.
After two or three minutes, Jenna suddenly pointed in a direction

and whispered, "Luo Shan... Why is she here?"
Following Jenna's lead, Lumian saw Luo Shan, dressed in a blouse and skirt, walking toward South Exit Three, glancing around as she moved.
"Call her over, don't let her disturb Zhou Mingrui." Lumian instructed Jenna,
Jenna had already been thinking the same thing.
Using her Assassin footwork, she quickly and discreetly approached Luo Shan, appearing right in front of her.
Luo Shan jumped in surprise, then opened her mouth in delighted shock.
Jenna raised a finger to her lips, signaling Luo Shan not to speak.
Luo Shan immediately closed her mouth and followed Jenna to the taxi lane entrance by South Exit Two.
When Luo Shan saw who was waiting with Jenna, she could no longer contain herself, pointing at Lumian and stammering, "You, you, you..."
Isn't this the dropout, Li Ming, who had a child when he was still a teenager?
Is he in league with Luo Fu, Jian Na, and Lumina?
"What a coincidence." Lumian smiled.
He gestured toward Jenna. "She's the mother of the child."
"Oh, oh..." Luo Shan suddenly felt a bit excited.
That explains it.
That is their relationship!
Suddenly learning this private detail about her friends dispelled much of Luo Shan's tension and anxiety.
Jenna finally asked, "Why did you come to the station?"
Luo Shan's expression instantly darkened.
She bit her lip and said, "I wanted to help you.
"I think, I think I can be of help."
As she spoke, her tone grew firmer.
Lumian was silent for a few seconds before saying. "Okay."
He glanced toward South Exit Three and casually added, "For now, there's nothing else to do but observe."
"Okay." This was Luo Shan's first time taking part in an operation like this, so she had no objections.
Looking back at Zhou Mingrui, Jenna thought aloud. "If Zhou Sasa really is a problem, if she's meant to make Zhou Mingrui produce a stable Mirror Person in the special mirror world, what would she do?"
Having experienced the events relating to the Hostel and with Moran Avigny, Jenna had a deep understanding of the special mirror world. She knew that to produce a stable, long-term Mirror

Person in that world, the person either had to be a descendant of the Primordial Demoness or certain Fourth Epoch Trier nobles, or they had to be exposed to the overflow of corruption from the special mirror world-namely, frequent activity in underground Trier.
However, in the dream city, there was no real special mirror world-it was hidden deep within the mirror world, without any overflow of corruption.
So, making Zhou Mingrui truly come into contact with the special mirror world was no easy task.
Lumian thought for a few seconds. "I don't know."
His calm, steady tone made Luo Shan suddenly feel that things might not be as bad as she had imagined.
A few more minutes passed, and passengers started coming through the gates at South Exit Three.
Jenna and Luo Shan's nerves immediately tightened.
Before long, they saw Zhou Mingrui smile and walk toward the exit.
There, a young girl emerged, wearing a black dress that made her seem more mature than her age.
Hur suitcase was also dark-colored, without any fluffy toys attached like many young women would have, but instead, it had a mechanical-looking Transformer hanging from it.
Her backpack wasn't cute either-black, made of synthetic leather, and large enough to hang a silver- white pocket watch with vine and leaf patterns on one side.
"Her style is very similar to reality's Melissa Moretti..." Jenna muttered under her breath.
Luo Shan couldn't help but glance at her.
When Zhou Sasa saw Zhou Mingrui approaching, she smiled brightly, waving her hand.
"Mingruil" she called out sweetly.
At that moment, she finally showed a hint of youthful charm.
"Perfect timing, I'll take you out for a big meal!" Zhou Mingrui grinned as he took his sister's suitcase.
"Mingrui, I fixed the pocket watch!" Zhou Sasa pulled the silver-white pocket watch with vine and leaf patterns from the side of her black backpack, showing it off to Zhou Mingrui.
Click. She pressed lightly on the top of the watch, and the silver-white cover popped open.
Almost simultaneously, Lumian and Jenna's eyes narrowed.
With their eagle-like vision, they noticed that the glass on the watch's face was dark, almost pure black, but still transparent enough to see the hands and numbers on the dial.

That glass gave both Lumian and Jenna a strong sense of familiarity, a familiarity rooted in their spiritual intuition and memory.
It was a fragment of the special mirror world!
They each possessed a piece of the special mirror world fragment!
"Is Zhou Sasa planning to use that pocket watch and the fragment of the special mirror world to make Zhou Mingrui generate a stable Mirror Person?" Jenna whispered, but instinctively kept her voice low.
She immediately recalled something.
The fragment of the special mirror world that Lumian possessed had come from the reanimated Panatiya, who had originally been arranged as Zhou Mingrui's lover, and eventually his wife.
"Was her intended function not only to stabilize Zhou Mingrui's mental state but also, after Zaratulstra's frontal attempt failed, to use that fragment of the special mirror world to somehow 'corrupt' Zhou Mingrui, so that a stable Mirror Person could be born? No wonder she has a fragment of the special mirror world... The Celestial Worthy always prepares multiple -no, three, or even more-contingencies..." Jenna bop suddenly realized.
She quickly said to Lumian, "We need to find a way to steal that pocket watch. We can't let Zhou Mingrui come into too much contact with it."
Lumian also thought of the reanimated Panatiya and observed for a few seconds before saying. "That pocket watch seems to hold significant sentimental value for Zhou Mingrui. He's holding onto it tightly. Taking it from under his nose won't be easy."
At this point, Zhou Mingrui had taken the silver-white pocket watch and was inspecting it repeatedly, looking very pleased.
Jenna understood Lumian's concern.
Not just difficult-nearly impossible, and extremely risky!
What Zhou Mingrui wanted to protect was what the dream subconscious wanted to protect!

Chapter 1027: What Is Real

As Jenna quickly tried to think of a way to "take" the silver pocket watch from Zhou Mingrui, Luo Shan suddenly spoke up. "I'll go."

Uh... Jenna and Lumian both turned to look at Luo Shan at the same time.

Luo Shan flashed a smile that said, "It's no big deal."

"I know Zhou Mingrui. We're on good terms, we're close colleagues. It'll be easier for me to get close to him than you two.

"Although he's somewhat suspicious of me now and knows I have Beyonder powers, and he's picked up on my hints, overall, he should still see me as an ally. someone on his side. Right? My analysis is correct, isn't it?"

Luo Shan showed a lack of confidence in these kinds of matters.

Before Lumian or Jenna could respond, she gave a self-deprecating smile and said, "Zhou Mingrui might be wary, might be on guard, but he'd never suspect that my target is the pocket watch.

"And besides..."

She paused for a moment and then added, "You two are outsiders. Even if you just trigger his suspicions, he might kick you out, but I won't. I'm from here. At most, I just need to be a little more careful afterward!"

"No, it's still dangerous." Jenna warned Luo Shan seriously. "We've never tried having someone like you directly confront Zhou Mingrui or do anything to him, so we can't predict what might happen or what the worst outcome might be. And judging by similar cases, you could end up with a light suddenly falling from the ceiling, smashing your head, killing you instantly, or you could drop dead the moment you touch that pocket watch."

Luo Shan's expression turned solemn.

She nodded slowly and said, "I know."

Before Jenna or Lumian could try to dissuade her further, she unexpectedly asked in a low voice, "What is the real me like?"

While Lumian was observing Zhou Mingrui and Zhou Sasa, Jenna fell silent for two seconds and then answered, "She's a civilian staff at the police station. Her father was also an official Beyonder, but he died in a Beyonder disaster.

"She's lively, though a bit lazy, but her colleagues really like her. They all treat her like a little sister. She's married now, with a lovely child."

Luo Shan listened intently, and after a few seconds, she said, "Isn't that another version of me?

"It really is another me..."

Her eyes flickered as she looked at Jenna, and with a hint of

playfulness, she said, "If you ever meet her, please tell her:
"I envy her..."
Hearing this, Jenna suddenly felt a lump in her throat, and emotions swirled in her chest, making it hard to speak.
Luo Shan slowly straightened her back.
"And also tell her, I have my own pride, and I've had experiences she might envy."
Luo Shan's serious expression gradually softened, as though she was talking to herself.
"I've been reflecting a lot lately, thinking about my past.
"My mother was so real, my interactions with her were so real. My father was real, too, and his sacrifice was just as real. My childhood, my middle school, high school, college, and my work experiences, all those details, all those moments-they were so real.
"I can still remember the smell of my mom, the taste of her best dish, eggplant with pork. I can remember where my dad's police uniform had a hole burned by a cigarette, where he hid snacks he bought for me...
"To you. these might be part of a a dreamscape, but to me, they couldn't be more real. They are the meaning of my existence.
"And because of those memories and that past, I feel real. No matter how you see it.
"Now, I'm going to do something I've always dreamed of. It will make me even more real. It will give my life more meaning, no longer just a dream or someone else's fantasy!"
Before Jenna could respond, Lumian suddenly said.
"Alright. You approach Zhou Mingrui, and find a way to steal that pocket watch."
Luo Shan was stunned, not expecting Lumian to agree so quickly.
In the blink of an eye, a smile appeared on her face, a smile filled with pride and nostalgia.
She looked at Jenna and asked softly, "I-if this dream breaks apart and you two leave alive, will you remember me? Will you remember that there was a Luo Shan, and the things I did?"
Jenna's vision blurred instantly, and she choked up as she said.
"I will. I'll always remember that I had a friend named Luo Shan. She was lively and kind, though a bit lazy. She was a girl who always missed her mom, but she had a strong sense of justice, just like her father..."
Luo Shan smiled, full of relief. "That means I really lived. My life was real."
She took a deep breath and pointed toward Zhou Mingrui and Zhou Sasa.
"I have to hurry. They're almost at the entrance to the ride-hailing

parking lot."
"Alright," Lumian and Jenna replied briefly.
Luo Shan took a step toward the exit but suddenly turned around, flashing a bright smile at Jenna and Lumian.
With a mix of nerves and excitement, she said, "I can be a guardian too."
Without waiting for a response, she turned back and ran toward Zhou Mingrui and Zhou Sasa, wearing her blouse and skirt.
She used her Reporter ability in small bursts, speeding up quickly, moving as gracefully and nimbly as a young deer.
Lumian watched her back and softly repeated her words, "Guardian..."
...
Inside Crimson Moon Hospital.
In a dimly lit patient room, with the curtains drawn, even though it was noon, Anthony used the last remaining Mirror Traversal effect of the Ice Mirror Charm, bringing himself and Ludwig out of the bathroom mirror.
They walked over to the hospital bed, where Anthony studied An Xiaotian's head. There were centipede-like stitches across his scalp, and his face was covered with thick, dark facial hair. After a few seconds, Anthony turned to Ludwig and asked, "Can he be cured?"
"I don't know. We'll have to try and see," Ludwig replied. He plucked a golden mushroom from the cracked corner of his eye and chewed it down.
The efficacy of the spores he absorbed from mushrooms to heal An Xiaotian was uncertain-this wasn't something a Gourmet typically dealt with.
Anthony surveyed the room before pulling out a blank sketchbook and a pencil. He set the book down on the TV table and quickly began sketching.
Before long, he finished a drawing.
It was a complex maze, but every path seemed to be blocked.
Anthony carefully tore out the sketch, packed away the remaining pages, and cautiously walked to the door. Using his Psychological Invisibility ability, he opened the door just a crack and placed the drawing against it.
The sketch shimmered for a moment and then melded seamlessly with the door.
With that done, Anthony observed the bustling nurses and wandering patients in the hallway before retreating back inside, closing the door behind him.
He turned to Ludwig and said, "Begin the treatment."

Ludwig hesitated briefly before stepping forward in small, cautious steps. He stood next to An Xiaotian's bed and placed both hands on the man's shaved head, which was covered with multiple scars and attached to various medical devices.
In the next moment, a damp, fresh sensation emanated from Ludwig's body, making the air feel like a forest after the rain.
Anthony waited patiently as the seconds ticked by.
Suddenly, he noticed small lumps forming beneath the skin on An Xiaotian's face, as if something was trying to push its way out. The lumps quickly retracted, shifting a few centimeters under the skin.
On the monitors, the data for heart rate, blood pressure, and oxygen saturation began fluctuating rapidly.
There's a response, but is it enough? Anthony held his breath without realizing it.
He cast Placate on himself, calming his nerves as he continued to wait.
Another twenty seconds passed before Anthony noticed the room becoming even darker, though he wasn't sure if it was real or just his imagination.
Then, all at once, the lumps beneath An Xiaotian's skin surged to the surface, tearing through his flesh and scalp.
They sprouted into various types of thumb-sized mushrooms-some had fleshy, veined patterns, others were soft and white, oozing a milky substance.
They kept growing, rapidly expanding until An Xiaotian's entire head was covered in a dense cluster of fungi, leaving only his eyes, nose, and mouth visible.
Beep! Beep! Beep!
The monitors blared, alarms going off as the data spiked wildly.
Several nurses rushed over, one leading the way and another pushing a medical cart.
But when they opened the door to the room, they didn't see the bed or the nearby bathroom. Instead, they were faced with a long hallway stretching into the unknown, with countless unmarked doors lining its sides.
Normally, the nurses would have stepped back to check if they were in the wrong place, but instead, they ran forward, opening door after door, desperately trying to find the real entrance to the room.
Amid the walling alarms, Anthony felt the room grow even darker. An ominous, dangerous energy began to fill the space.
Ludwig withdrew his hands, stepped back to Anthony's side, and stared at the now mushroom-covered An Xiaotian. Licking his lips, he said, "It worked."

Just as he spoke, An Xiaotian, still unconscious, suddenly sat bolt upright.
Bzzz, the electrical appliances in the room-lights, TV, monitors-all emitted a loud buzzing sound, so intense that it drowned out the beeping alarms.
At that moment, An Xiaotian, sitting up straight, opened his eyes. They were deep, dark, weathered, and slightly hollow.
In stark contrast to the mushrooms growing all over his head, his eyes looked unnervingly normal and sane.
An Xiaotian opened his mouth and spat out countless tiny spores, his voice hoarse as he said, "Be careful..."
As soon as Anthony and Ludwig heard those words, they suddenly felt an overwhelming sense of oppression. The darkness around them seemed to solidify, closing in on them and pushing them out.
Even with Anthony's mental fortitude and emotional control, he couldn't help but shiver, feeling the urge to flee the room.
The next second, An Xiaotian's voice turned sharp and piercing.
"Be careful of Zhou Mingrui!"

Chapter 1028: The Medium

"Be careful of Zhou Mingrui!"

An Xiaotian's voice echoed through the hospital room, drowning out the alarms from the monitoring equipment.

Wh- As Anthony struggled to hide his shock and out surprise, thunder rumbled outside.

The sky over the entire dream city suddenly turned gray, as if the brilliant sunlight had been cut off by a layer of clouds.

In Anthony's vision, An Xiaotian's figure suddenly be or became blurry, sometimes expanding, sometimes contracting, like a hazy, confusing dream.

The next second, Anthony and Ludwig felt the dream's strong rejection, sensing their rapid transformation into marionettes.

...

Inside Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station.

Luo Shan quickly caught up with Zhou Mingrui and Zhou Sasa, intercepting them before they turned onto the road leading to the parking lot.

"Zhou Mingrui!" Luo Shan called out.

Zhou Mingrui, who had already put the silver pocket watch in his trouser pocket, turned around and looked at the rapidly approaching Luo Shan with confusion. "Why are you here?"

Weren't you just at work in the office, slacking off and chatting with me?

Zhou Sasa looked at Luo Shan, then at her brother, and smartly kept her mouth shut, saying nothing.

Luo Shan stopped within arm's reach of Zhou Mingrui and said urgently, "There's something important I need to tell you."

What could be so important that it couldn't be said over WeChat or phone, and you had to rush here to tell me in person? Zhou Mingrui remembered Luo Shan's previous warnings and looked at his colleague quizzically, waiting for her to continue.

On her way over, Luo Shan had already decided that today's strategy would be "honesty." She said with a serious expression.

"There's an item you shouldn't touch right now. I'm here to keep it safe for you."

Taking advantage of Zhou Mingrui's confused thinking, she suddenly reached out with her hand, using the ultimate speed of a Reporter.

Zhou Mingrui couldn't dodge in time and Luo Shan "forcefully snatched" the silver pocket watch with vine and leaf patterns from his trouser pocket.

"This is it!" Luo Shan quickly explained,

Zhou Mingrui, who instinctively wanted to grab it back, suddenly froze, looking at the pocket watch and muttering in disbelief.
"This?"
What could be wrong with it?
This change also left the observing Zhou Sasa confused and bewildered. She blurted out, "Mingrui, what's going on?"
What are you two talking about?
Are the two of you flirting?
Zhou Mingrui didn't answer Zhou Sasa's question. focusing his gaze on Luo Shan.
Luo Shan didn't bother to conceal anything and couldn't think of how to hint at it, so she directly raised the silver pocket watch.
"This will bring you danger!
"Think carefully, isn't it a bit different from before?"
Although Luo Shan wasn't clear on what exactly was wrong with the pocket watch in her hand, from Jian Na and Li Ming's conversation, she knew the watch was linked to some special mirror world fragment.
In other words, the watch was different from before- if there had been an anomaly in the past, Zhou Mingrui would have had problems long ago!
Zhou Mingrui suddenly fell into thought, frowning slightly.
Indeed, the watch's glass face seemed to have been replaced...
Who would normally use black glass for a watch face, even if it was transparent...
Beside them, Zhou Sasa grumbled, "I've repaired it, of course it's a bit different from before."
Zhou Mingrui thought for a few seconds, then cautiously said to Luo Shan, "Alright, you keep it safe for me for a few days."
Although this watch held great sentimental value for him, no object, no matter how important, could compare to real safety. Even if it was lost because of this, he would only feel heartache and regret, but not remorse.
How understanding, just like usual... And I haven't had any problems yet! Luo Shan felt both relieved and grateful as she sighed to herself.
She quickly gave Zhou Mingrui a meaningful look. "I'll make a move first."
After getting Zhou Mingrui's permission, she turned and walked towards where Jian Na and Li Ming were.
She suppressed the explosive joy in her heart, not showing it for the moment.
I succeeded!
I did itl

I completed an important task at the risk of my life!
As Luo Shan's steps became increasingly light, she suddenly felt her body become weightless.
Her throat began to tighten, as if a rope was wrapped around it.
Her breathing quickly became labored, and her knees and elbows felt as if they were filled with thick glue.
Still... something went wrong....
Will I... be strangled... to death... like this... in public?
In this state, Luo Shan heard the rumbling thunder.
She found her surroundings had become quite dark and extremely oppressive, with the passing pedestrians all appearing blurry and distorted.
This... really is... a dream... Luo Shan suddenly had this realization, a realization tinged with sorrow and sighing.
At this moment, she saw Jian Na.
Jian Na was still clear.
Then, Luo Shan clearly saw the anxious and worried expression on Jian Na's face.
She once again felt that her life was still real, still meaningful.
She managed to give Jenna another smile, with difficulty.
Her body also gradually became blurry, like those background characters seen hazily in a dream.
Rumble!
Amid the rolling thunder, Zhou Mingrui also noticed the blurring and distortion of the people around him, and the darkness and unreality of the entire high- speed rail station.
The only light came from the side and behind him and Zhou Sasa, from the passage leading to the parking lot.
Clear radiance gathered there, as if forming a huge door.
Zhou Mingrui instinctively grabbed Zhou Sasa's forearm, no longer caring about the luggage, and ran wildly towards that door of light.
After running a few steps, he felt Zhou Sasa stop, becoming heavy, making it impossible for him to drag her forward.
Has Sasa also been affected by the anomaly? Zhou Mingrui turned his head concernedly to look at his sister.
In his eyes, Zhou Sasa had somehow already become transparent, thin, like a mirror and the reflection of a person in a mirror.
Zhou Sasa's black dress had half-merged with the "mirror," making the surface appear dark.
Zhou Mingrui saw himself in the dark mirror.
Short black hair, deep brown eyes, non-prescription glasses, soft contours and a somewhat handsome appearance....
As Zhou Mingrui clearly saw the image in the mirror, the him in the mirror suddenly curled his lips, revealing an eerie and chilling

smile.
The Zhou Mingrui in the mirror began to overlap with Zhou Sasa, who had regressed to a pure female form.
Wh-Zhou Mingrui instinctively took two steps back.
Just then, he heard a "bang" of a gunshot.
A bullet tinged with a dull blue-green color shot out from somewhere, hitting the mirror that Zhou Sasa had become, hitting the reflected image of Zhou Mingrui in the mirror.
Certain Death!
Franca had lent the Inevitable Gun to Jenna.
Crack!
That mirror quickly shattered, falling to the ground like a rainstorm.
All of its fragments lost their luster, no longer reflecting anything.
Zhou Mingrui instinctively turned sideways and saw Jenna, holding a brass-colored revolver, with delicate features, not at all blurry or distorted.
He didn't recognize this beautiful young woman.
Jenna nodded slightly to Zhou Mingrui, trying her best to show her goodwill.
When Zhou Mingrui witnessed his mirror self revealing that chilling smile, he had already judged this to be an enemy, someone harboring malice towards him.
This led to a series of thoughts:
They've used Sasa!
I must find out what has happened to the real Sasa!
Based on this judgment, Zhou Mingrui held no ill will towards Jenna, who had shattered the mirror and his mirror self, believing she was sent by friendly forces to stop this.
Seeing Zhou Mingrui return a friendly nod, Jenna hadn't had time to feel joy, hadn't had time to think about how to save Luo Shan, when she suddenly felt the dream strongly rejecting her, felt her thoughts becoming sluggish, felt two kinds of pain attacking simultaneously.
She was being kicked out of the dream, she was being rapidly turned into a marionette.
Just as Zhou Mingrui was about to ask the woman opposite what to do next, he saw her face contort, seeming to be in great pain.
Has she been attacked? An invisible attack? Zhou Mingrui hurriedly looked around, searching for potential enemies.
He then saw that the pillars and screens throughout the high-speed rail station had become illusory, either elongated or widened, becoming dark mirrors.
All these mirrors reflected Zhou Mingrui's searching figure, but

without exception, the Zhou Mingrui in the mirrors all wore cold, chilling smiles.
"They" suddenly stopped, all turning to look at Jenna. their voices overlapping as they laughed.
"It's too late!
"Zhou Sasa is the medium, the medium pointing to that mirror world!"
Jenna, who was fighting against the dream's rejecting force and rapid marionettization, suddenly froze.
Too late?
Has the Zhou Mingrui in the mirror already been born?
Is the Celestial Worthy about to use this?
On one side of the high-speed rail station that had transformed into a mirror world, Lumian, who had never formally appeared, unhurriedly took out the magic mirror Arrodes.
In a rich timbre, he intoned, "The second question.
On the surface of the mirror, pale words quickly appeared: "Ask quickly!"
Arrodes didn't repeat its rules, because this was the second question, not the first.
Lumian curled his lips slightly and said, "Are you a weapon, or a medium?"
On the dark mirror surface shimmering with water, the pale words writhed and changed, forming new content: "Medium!"
Then, the magic mirror Arodes posed its own question:
"How do you want to use me?"
"Certainly not as a brick to throw at someone," Lumian laughed.
...
At Four-Way Street, in the Jinxiu Dongfang Community, inside the Mute Art Studio.
Anderson Hood sat in front of his easel, bored, weal yawning.
At this moment, he heard the rumbling thunder and felt the light suddenly dim, the environment becoming extremely oppressive.
Anderson stood up and walked to the window, finding that the pedestrians below had all become blurry masses.
He smiled and looked up at the sky, saying. "My task is about to be completed."
As he spoke, he raised his right hand and snapped his fingers with a loud crack.
Boom!
A violent explosion occurred deep within the building, with flames rising from various places.
In an instant, the newly renovated but uninhabited "motel" was engulfed by raging red flames.

Chapter 1029: Deep Darkness

As rumbling thunder sounded and the sky darkened, making the environment extremely oppressive.
Queen Mystic, maintaining the illusion of Lumina, picked up the phone and dialed a number.
It was the private number of Chief Yagates.
After connecting, Bernadette said directly, "I've received personal threats. I need the best protection."
She was reporting to the police.
She immediately explained, "It may be due to my father transferring power to me. I need protection!"
Bernadette emphasized the word "protection".
Chief Yagates was silent for a saying, "Okay."
...
In the gloomy oppression, most people in the dream city became blurry.
But this didn't stop them from going online, using their phones, checking information.
Just then, whether videos, books, novels, or messages, everything suddenly collapsed into pure snow-like static.
These countless noise points rapidly spread, forming a huge information vortex.
The online world experienced a malfunction.
...
Inside Mushu Hospital.
The blurry and distorted patients, doctors, nurses, orderlies and those who were still clear simultaneously raised their heads, looking up towards the ceiling.
The dark and gloomy sky suddenly split open, and pure brilliant sunlight instantly poured down, shining directly on the main building of Mushu Hospital, piercing every dark corner and every underground level.
In the low-hanging leaden clouds, countless silver white electric snakes intertwined into huge, flamboyant lightning.
Following the path carved out by the sunlight, this lightning struck the main building of Mushu Hospital, submerging it in a dazzling and intense ocean of thunder.
...
Inside the mirror-world-transformed Yangdu High - Speed Rail Station.
After answering the magic mirror Arrodes's question, Lumian didn't rush to take further action. He still calmly asked as if waiting for something. "The third question, how can we get the

owner of the Star Dream Provisions Store to provide necessary help for Franca?"
On the surface of the magic mirror, those pale words didn't change color, but recombined into new content: "Pass Franca's Mirror Substitution through me, through the mirror world, to Her."
Then, the magic mirror Arrodes asked in return: "Don't you have it?"
"I do." Lumian laughed, took out Franca's Mirror Substitution, and pressed it into the glass mirror surface of the magic mirror Arrodes.
At this special moment when the dream city was shaken and character images were blurred, the restrictions on his Beyonder powers also lessened. He had recovered to a level almost equivalent to Sequence 4, which was why he could use the mirror world to quickly send an item to the Star Dream Provisions Store, which was clearly over ten kilometers away.
After doing this, Lumian glanced twice at Zhou Mingrui, who looked grave and was constantly moving away from those dark mirrors and mirror selves, then gripped the magic mirror Arrodes with his left palm.
It's time!
He unhesitatingly activated the residual aura of the Blood Emperor in the center of his right palm.
The brand that had turned dark red due to the fusion with an unknown boon suddenly became prominent, seemingly showing signs of melting back into blood.
However, that mad, violent, bloody aura didn't dissipate, being firmly suppressed by a deathly pale force.
Of course, after Lumian's last use of the corpse wax V candle, the pale and dark red had shown extremely subtle signs of fusion. Now, at that point of fusion, it strangely darkened, caving in slightly, showing unusual changes.
Lumian reached his right palm into the Traveler's Bag and took out the Card of Blasphemy he got from the mirror Emperor Roselle-the Demoness card!
He pressed this Demoness card tightly against his palm, against the mutated residual aura of the Blood Emperor and the Underworld Daoist's seal, against the slight depression produced by the fusion of pale and dark red.
Almost simultaneously, Lumian felt a bone-chilling coldness and horror in the center of his right palm.
He didn't need to look with his eyes; an image naturally appeared in his mind.
His palm had gained a "pinhole", a "pinhole" formed by pure

darkness.
As expected, this Demoness card should be used here... If I didn't have it, I'd have to light the corpse wax candle, which would not only be rushed in terms of time, requiring the ritual to be held earlier and adding considerable risk, but the effect might not be as good... As these thoughts flashed through Lumian's mind, he extended his right hand holding the Demoness card towards the magic mirror Arrodes.
His hand penetrated the surface of this ancient silver mirror, reaching into the area behind the mirror.
But he didn't enter himself, it was more like using the magic mirror as a medium for "casting spells".
The next second, a scene appeared in Lumian's mind: the dark void around the area behind the mirror seemed to be covered by an invisible curtain, behind which pairs of eyes were watching the outside world, and nameless things were flowing silently.
This was the area behind the mirror corresponding to the magic mirror Arrodes, which was clearly somewhat special compared to other mirrors.
Then, Lumian "saw" that the curtain covering the dark void silently collapsed and peeled off as his right hand entered.
The entire darkness was collapsing.
What appeared in Lumian's mind wasn't the pairs of eyes he had imagined, nor was it a surging river, but a viscous liquid that was difficult to describe in words, seemingly containing all colors.
These liquids seemed to form an illusory ocean. Although Lumian hadn't truly "seen" or touched it, just sensing it made him feel that his body and mind were beginning to fall, his spirit gradually becoming abnormal.
Then, the illusory ocean was pushed aside by an invisible force, moving away from Lumian's "mind".
Following this path through the ocean, Lumian's consciousness quickly went forward, "seeing" the gray stone walls, "seeing" the blood flowing on the stone walls.
Those crimson blood formed sentences: "To test out the correct plan, He finally decided to let the Red Priest and the Demoness from the same era meet, guiding Them to combine together...
"This will bring about a destined accident..."
The scene froze here, and the magic mirror Arrodes in Lumian's palm suddenly emitted an ancient, chaotic radiance.
Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station, in the arrival hall.
Zhou Mingrui had already turned and started running wildly, but no matter where he ran, the pillars, walls, floor, and ceiling would turn into mirrors, reflecting his figure.

And the him in the mirror always wore a cold, chilling smile.
After running for a while, Zhou Mingrui suddenly stopped, because his head, feet, and surroundings had all become dark mirrors, all reflecting him.
"Give up...
"Give up..."
Every Zhou Mingrui in the mirrors persuaded.
They were not only persuading, but also reaching their hands out of the mirror surfaces, grabbing at Zhou Mingrui, leaving him nowhere to hide, nowhere to escape.
Zhou Mingrui didn't give up. In the narrow space, he dodged left and right, barely avoiding the first round of grasps.
At this moment, a pure darkness covered with grayish-white fog and hiding a vast city appeared prominently in all the mirrors on the scene.
In the blink of an eye, the grayish-white fog and the vast city collapsed towards the depths of the darkness.
That darkness "came alive", surging towards the mirror surfaces, surging towards the mirror Zhou Mingrui behind each mirror.
The mirror Zhou Mingrui tried hard to grab Zhou Mingrui, wanting to escape from the mirrors, but in such a short time, it was really difficult to succeed.
Soon, the darkness surged to the area behind the mirrors, swallowing one mirror Zhou Mingrui after another, freezing the cold, chilling smiles on their faces.
This all-engulfing darkness irresistibly filled all the areas behind the mirrors with an overwhelming momentum.
All the mirrored Zhou Mingruis disappeared.
The darkness continued forward, breaking through mirror after mirror, pouring into Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station.
This high-speed rail station began to collapse, inch by inch, as if the dream was gradually shattering, the fragments falling into the deep darkness.
At this time, Jenna found that the dream's rejecting force and the force of rapid marionettization had both weakened a lot. She hurriedly approached the blurry Luo Shan, trying to take her out of the high-speed rail station.
As for whether the damage to the dream would continue after leaving the high-speed rail station, and what would happen to Luo Shan then, Jenna didn't think about it for the moment, nor could she think about it.
Unfortunately, the distance between them was too far. Before Jenna could truly get close to Luo Shan, she saw that deep darkness swallow the corresponding area.

Luo Shan's blurry figure rapidly faded, bursting like a soap bubble.
The last scene she saw was Jian Na rushing towards her with an anxious face.
She smiled with relief.
She opened her mouth, but couldn't say anything.
She completely disappeared.
At the same time, Jenna seemed to hear Luo Shan saying: "Remember me, don't forget!"
Jenna stopped her steps, and before the deep darkness surged over, she left this city with the help of the remaining dream rejecting force.
She responded to Luo Shan's words in her heart, I will remember you forever!
Lumian, who was far from this deep darkness, silently sighed in relief after seeing Jenna's expression become confused and bewildered.
Next, he watched expressionlessly as the dreamscape Jenna was dissolved by the deep darkness, as Zhou Mingrui ran wildly in the high-speed rail station, trying to get away from the deep darkness surging like seawater.
The surge of that darkness gradually slowed down, as if suppressed and weakened by the dream's main consciousness.
Finally, after swallowing more than half of the high- speed rail station, the deep darkness stopped just tens of centimeters away from Zhou Mingrui.
The dream city stabilized again, and even the you remaining passengers and those meeting them gradually became clear.
Zhou Mingrui ran a few more steps, confirming that the danger had really eased.
He then saw the handsome security guard Li Ming walking out from a corner not far away, walking towards him.
"Is this upheaval over?" Zhou Mingrui asked urgently.
Lumian had already put the magic mirror Arrodes and the Demoness card back into the Traveler's Bag. He looked at Zhou Mingrui and calmly answered when they were still a few meters apart, "I'd like to say that things are over.
"But unfortunately, they aren't yet."
Zhou Mingrui was stunned for a moment, his back gradually straightening, the corners of his mouth curling up slightly, his expression no longer the same as before.
He chuckled softly.
"Yes, not yet."

Chapter 1030: Face to Face

Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station, half collapsed and fallen into deep darkness, as if swallowed by an abyss. The other half, though restored to stability and normalcy, remained dim with unlit lamps. Only a few paths leading to the outside world had light converging, forming brilliant and clear light gates.

In this environment, Zhou Mingrui, with his back to the deep darkness, looked at Lumian and asked in a calm voice, "You know?"

Lumian nodded lightly and said, "Yes.

"Theoretically, I should have waited for Anthony and Ludwig to wake up An Xiaotian, hear words like 'be careful of Zhou Mingrui' from his mouth, then be kicked out of the dream, and through the indirect influence of the Major Arcana cards, receive the corresponding information to know the corresponding truth. But Peng Deng's true hint has already given me the answer.

"On the surface, he was hinting to us that he was the childhood friend of both Mr. Fool and the Celestial Worthy, but the reverse is also true. Zhou Mingrui is both Peng Deng's childhood friend and the childhood friend of the original God Almighty. The two aspects of his identity are unified and merged together.

"In other words, Zhou Mingrui is both Mr. Fool and you, the Celestial Worthy!"

Zhou Mingrui, wearing a faint smile, slightly raised his chin, assuming a listening posture.

Lumian further said, "This also aligns with the magic mirror Arrodes's hint to 'beware of the night'. During the day, Mr. Fool's power takes the upper hand, and Zhou Mingrui equals Mr. Fool. At night, you, the Celestial Worthy, become active, and Zhou Mingrui will be closer to you. So, even just approaching, without any hints, there, would be risks.

"Based on this judgment, any hints, help, or awakening given to Zhou Mingrui would benefit both Mr. Fool and you, the Celestial Worthy."

"And Peng Deng, as a symbol of the original God Almighty, doesn't meet Zhou Mingrui at night because if you two were to meet, there's a high probability that very unpleasant things and accidents would occur."

Zhou Mingrui nodded and said, "He is formed from that bit of power left in the magic mirror and part of the spirit and consciousness that Grisha brought into the dream. He can't compare to me here. If we were to meet at night, it would be advantageous for me, but problematic for Him."

Zhou Mingrui didn't deny that his current self was The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings.
Lumian showed an expression of understanding. "That individual's real name is Grisha?"
Without waiting for Zhou Mingrui to respond, he continued, "Combining Peng Deng's true hint, Chief Yagates's state, the fundamental reason for the dream's restrictions, and other facts, I had roughly guessed what had happened before and your current situation when I entered the dream for the third time.
"Several years ago, shortly after Mr. Fool had just fallen asleep, he probably used himself as bait to lure you out and sealed you into the Zhou Mingrui manifestation formed from his spirit and consciousness.
"From a mystical perspective, this symbolizes the fusion and opposition of the both of you, while in reality, you are indeed within his body, indeed restricted by him. This is reflected in the dream with a similar symbolism!"
At this point, Lumian paused, as if observing Zhou Mingrui's reaction.
Zhou Mingrui, with his smile unchanged, said, "Continue, I'm listening."
Smiling, Lumian replied, "This also explains why only Peng Deng and Zhang Yujia from Zhou Mingrui's original character relationships appeared, while others came from the identities of Klein Moretti, Gehrman Sparrow, and so on.
"He doesn't want those feelings buried deep in his to be exploited by you. Of heart, the softest ones, to be course, for those you already know, there's nothing he can do."
Zhou Mingrui nodded lightly and said, "Peng Deng and Zhang Yujia didn't originally exist either. They were created by Grisha using the Dreamweaver ability and Zhou Mingrui's subconscious cognition."
"I see, no wonder Zhou Mingrui suddenly froze when mentioning other childhood friends. That might be the true reflection of Peng Deng." Lumian had a sudden realization.
He continued, "Afterwards, Mr. Fool might have made a wish or used some other ability to remove Beyonder powers from the dream city, allowing Zhou Mingrui to live as an ordinary human. During this process, he might have been fooled by you, forgetting who he really was, forgetting many things.
"Overall, this ordinary human state is very advantageous for Mr. Fool, because he became a great existence step by step from being an ordinary person. Even though he has inevitably been influenced and eroded by godhood, he still retains a part of his humanity, the part that is intense and fervent for him. But you, The Celestial

Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings, are naturally great and don't possess such humanity at all.
"When the battlefield between you two is fixed on an ordinary human with only humanity and in an urban environment without Beyonder powers, you are naturally suppressed, restricted, and weakened. Humanity temporarily triumphs over godhood,
"This can also be interpreted symbolically. The fact that Zhou Mingrui, who has merged Mr. Fool and you. the Celestial Worthy, is an ordinary person symbolizes that humanity has gained the upper hand, with godhood suppressed to a corner, temporarily negligible."
"Yes, at that time I was influenced by that drop of river water and couldn't do more. I could only accept this change," Zhou Mingrui frankly admitted.
Lumian glanced at those dream figures running out of the high-speed rail station and said,
"When you recovered, you started influencing this dream city, either with the help of other beings or by summoning your original believers, bringing items involving the supernatural, like automatic vending machines, onto the stage.
"One of their important meanings is to gradually guide Mr. Fool, letting him recognize that this is a world with supernatural abilities, recognizing from Sequence 9 step by step to Sequence 0. And as this recognition and sequence level changes, the godhood will gradually grow stronger, step by step suppressing humanity.
"According to this plan, the longer we linger in the dream city, the more we use supernatural abilities, the more beneficial it actually is for you. This is something you didn't tell Zaratulstra and other believers, fearing it might invite interference from other beings.
"Similarly, you don't want to wait that long, which is why you induced Zhou Mingrui to consume the Assassin potion and let the mirrored Emperor Roselle enter here.
"You wanted to use the method of creating a stable Mirror Person to split Zhou Mingrui. This is equivalent to opening a gap in the seal that Mr. Fool constructed with himself. Once the Mirror Person is gradually mastered by you, you can walk out of the mirror, replace the 'original body', using truth as falsehood and turning falsehood into truth. As for the gender change affecting cognition, those are just smoke and mirrors.
"But unfortunately, the original God Almighty foresaw this scene before His fall and left arrangements spanning several eras, leaving behind the magic mirror Arrodes.
"One of the functions of the great horror in the depths of the special mirror world is prepared for you!"

Zhou Mingrui said with a smile, "When I initially woke up and saw that magic mirror, I roughly guessed what kind of things would happen."
Lumian nodded quite approvingly. "Yes, you should have made extra preparations for this.
"However..."
At this point, he smiled and said, "Of all the things Amon said, the one I agree with most is:
"Filter out the interference of complex information and see the most fundamental facts.
"So, what is the most fundamental fact now?"
Lumian stared into Zhou Mingrui's deep brown eyes behind his plain glasses and said,
"The most fundamental fact now is that I'm standing in front of you, saying so many words about your true situation, yet I haven't been kicked out of this dream, nor do I feel myself being marionettized!"
Lumian smiled again. "You had Zhou Sasa arrive in Yangdu early, not only to disrupt our rhythm and prevent the original God Almighty's arrangements from truly becoming reality, but also to prevent interference from other beings, wanting to create a stable, long-term Mirror Person for Zhou Mingruis before They were ready.
"This shows that you still attach great importance to and anticipate this matter. Extra preparations, if possible, are better left unused as they're not as convenient.
"I watched as things deteriorated step by step, as you truly found an opportunity to awaken, and had Anthony and Ludwig go to wake up An Xiaotian, which actually no longer had much significance. I asked Queen Mystic to help direct the dream's main consciousness's attention, asked Stiano and other gods to help confuse the information world and contain other places, all to attract your attention, to make you feel that you could win, to invest more power and stakes in this matter.
"This way, when the original God Almighty's arrangements erupted through the medium of the magic mirror Arrodes, you would be weakened to the greatest extent.
"So, I, who entered the dream for the third time, came right before you, spoke the truth of the facts, and still wasn't kicked out on the spot.
"You temporarily don't have this ability!"
Zhou Mingrui laughed. "Don't you think you're like bait right now?"
Lumian sighed and said, "I know, you're waiting for your extra preparations to arrive. Otherwise, how could I have this

opportunity to dialogue with you?
"But, I'm also waiting."
At this point, a brilliant smile appeared on Lumian's face.
"Haven't you noticed that one of my companions is missing?
"So many things erupting simultaneously just now was also to distract your attention, to make you overlook her actions!"
Seeing Zhou Mingrui gazing at him, Lumian slightly raised his chin and said emphatically, "The Major Arcana card holders' guesses weren't wrong, their attempts weren't wrong either!"
...
Dream City, inside a movie theater.
Franca was sitting in the second row, watching the screen in front where The Great Pirate 3 was playing.
At this moment, her body was faint and indistinct, as if a sketch had been erased with an eraser. Around her, the few spectators had all become blurry, but were slowly stabilizing, gradually becoming clear.
Franca had checked earlier and found that due to The Great Pirate 3 about to end its run, only two theaters were showing it for the noon screening. So she specifically took a taxi to this one, the farthest from Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station.
And her search information had been lost in the current chaos and disorder of the Internet.
Hearing the thunder in the sky quickly recede, seeing Gehrman Sparrow standing on the bow of the pirate ship appear on the screen, Franca suddenly stood up.
She walked to the front of the projection room in a few steps, and before the few spectators could protest, she took a breath, stretched out her right palm, and pressed it against the screen.
Her figure quickly became ethereal, leaning forward, entering that screen.

Chapter 1031: Gehrman Sparrow

Just like when Lumian entered the surveillance world, after Franca's vision recovered, she found herself standing on the deck of a three-masted sailing ship, surrounded by undulating azure waves and howling winds.

In front of her, at the bow of the ship, stood a young man wearing a silk top hat, dressed in a long black coat, clean-shaven, with a lean but angular face, bright eyes behind gold-rimmed glasses.

Gehrman Sparrow.

The protagonist of The Great Pirate 3 movie, quite similar to Zhou Mingrui but more stern-looking.

Gehrman Sparrow suddenly turned his gaze towards Franca, expressionless, his eyes cold and piercing.

Franca instinctively stepped back twice, forcing herself to stand firm.

Gehrman Sparrow observed her for a few seconds-her high ponytail, white T- shirt, and loose gray pants-and asked in a calm voice, "Are you Tracy's elder?"

Tracy was the name of the Pirate Admiral, Ailment Maiden.

He recognizes me as a Demoness? Franca glanced at Gehrman Sparrow's left palm hanging at his side, seemingly covered in a layer of human skin, and said sincerely, "I'm a subordinate of the Demoness of Black. She is the child of the Demoness of White. We are not on good terms."

This was all the honest truth.

According to Franca's understanding, lying in front of Gehrman Sparrow was a very low-yield behavior. Once exposed, one would immediately face an attack like a violent storm.

Moreover, Franca wasn't clear about what souls were actually grazing inside the glove-shaped Sealed Artifact Creeping Hunger when the real Gehrman Sparrow met Ailment Maiden Tracy. She only knew that in Madam Magician's embellished story, the glove at this time could allow Gehrman Sparrow to use the mind-reading ability of a Psychiatrist, so lying was indeed a high-risk behavior.

Therefore, honesty was the best policy!

The gold-rimmed glasses-wearing Gehrman Sparrow observed Franca for a few seconds and said, "What is your purpose?"

Lumian had said that although the Gehrman Sparrow in the movie isn't exactly the same as the real Gehrman Sparrow, the original author of the movie was Madam Magician. When creating The Great Pirate 3, she would inevitably incorporate her own understanding of Gehrman Sparrow. At that time, she already

knew that Gehrman Sparrow was an avatar of Mr. Fool, and driven by her subconscious, she would likely integrate some of Mr. Fool's personality and choices as well. So, to convince Gehrman Sparrow to accept such an absurd thing, one has to approach from this angle... Franca's thoughts raced, and she blurted out, "We are the same kind!

"We are both transmigrators!"

Gehrman Sparrow looked at Franca without speaking.

He was holding a revolver in his right hand.

Franca explained seriously, "We are transmigrators in time. Hehe, actually, it's not transmigration, but being frozen in a special place by a great existence, only to be returned to reality after thousands or tens of thousands of years, or even longer. You are like this, and so am I."

Before Gehrman Sparrow could refute or simply shoot her, Franca quickly added, "The name Gehrman comes from 'Bloodborne', and Sparrow is the surname of Captain Jack from 'Pirates of the Caribbean'. They are spliced together to form your name."

After saying this, Franca felt that the pressure from Gehrman Sparrow's gaze had noticeably lessened.

She let out an undisguised sigh of relief and continued, "The reason I've come to find you is that the end of days will come early, and you have inherited the legacy of the great existence that froze us. You are a key part in facing the apocalypse.

"Are you willing to leave here with me to face the apocalypse?"

After making her request, Franca smiled awkwardly but politely. "Do you believe what I've said?"

Gehrman Sparrow looked at Franca without saying a word, making her extremely nervous.

After a moment, Gehrman Sparrow said in a low voice, "I can give it a try.

"But if I find out you're lying..."

In a flash, he raised his revolver, aiming at Franca's head.

Bang!

A bullet flew out, grazing Franca's head and hitting the nearby cabin.

Gehrman Sparrow lowered his revolver without saying anything more.

I have a Mirror Substitution... Franca grumbled internally.

She quickly approached Gehrman Sparrow and grabbed his arm.

"I'll take you to the gathering point right now!"

Yes, her assigned task was to find the currently playing The Great Pirate 3 movie, enter the screen when the dream appeared abnormal but was about to stabilize, and bring the Gehrman

Sparrow character into the dream city!
Wouldn't such a movie character dissipate quickly after leaving the screen and entering the dream city? Moreover, my Despair potion hasn't been fully digested yet. *What if the dream shatters because of this?* At the crucial moment, Franca's heart pounded, feeling very uneasy.
She didn't hesitate for long. Gritting her teeth, she silently said to herself, Trust that guy!
Trust that the Major Arcana card holders can still remedy this!
At worst, I'll revert to a Demoness of Affliction level!
As her inner voice echoed, Franca, holding Gehrman Sparrow's arm, moved towards the outside of the screen.
...
Inside Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station, half in deep darkness and half in dim light.
Zhou Mingrui looked at Lumian in front of him and said, "You still chose the Gehrman Sparrow direction?"
His voice was steady, without a hint of fluctuation, like a teacher pointing out a student's mistake.
"Yes," Lumian smiled and said, "But it's not An Xiaotian, nor Jia Yu. These were all options meant to mislead us.
"My companion Franca went to watch The Great Pirate 3 movie. It should be one of the last screenings. She is the Demoness of Despair and can enter the screen to bring out the Gehrman Sparrow from the movie."
Lumian emphasized the name "Franca", as if wanting the Celestial Worthy to remember it.
Zhou Mingrui smiled slightly and said, "A movie character can only maintain its form for three seconds after leaving the screen."
"What about adding the Gehrman Sparrow dream manifestation woven by a Dreamweaver, the numerous Gehrman Sparrow anchors in reality, and the widely spread stories and poems about Gehrman Sparrow?" Lumian asked as if in casual conversation.
...
Trier, inside a luxurious villa.
Madam Justice, who was monitoring the changes in the dream city, suddenly stood up and said to all the Major Arcana card holders, "The anomaly has appeared. Let's begin."
Her voice was a bit tense, her heart seemingly not as calm as her exterior.
Madam Magician immediately rose from the sofa and half-opened her arms.
A brilliant, dreamlike starlight gate appeared in the bedroom where Franca was sleeping, appearing in the shadowless sunlight.

This grand door opened heavily, revealing the faint grayish-white fog inside.
Within the fog, a city of indeterminate size faintly appeared.
Madam Magician didn't stop, forcibly opening another "door", an opening, on that grayish-white fog.
At this moment, her face became semi-transparent, with strange, brilliantly shimmering worms wriggling and crawling through her pores and hair.
Madam Justice saw the movie theater where Franca was through that hole in the gray fog, then closed her emerald-like eyes, raised her right hand, and began to carefully weave the dream manifestation of Gehrman Sparrow.
On the other side, Mr. Sun placed The Fool's Sacred Emblem on the already prepared altar and began to pray to the Angel of Redemption Gehrman Sparrow as usual, praising him repeatedly.
As a demigod of the Sun pathway and the pope of the Church of The Fool, his prayers and praises quickly brought changes to the altar. Points of holy light appeared, surrounding the giant Sacred Emblem of The Fool, making the surroundings seem more sacred and solemn.
At this moment, Ma'am Hermit, who had arrived nearby, removed the thick glasses perched on her nose bridge. Imitating Gehrman Sparrow, she placed her hand on her chest and bowed.
Instantly, a scene appeared above the altar.
In the scene, Gehrman Sparrow, wearing a silk top hat and black coat, walked step by step across a desolate land in a dark environment illuminated by flashes of lightning, followed by a long line of people.
This was Mystical Re-enactment of the Mystery Pryer pathway.
Gehrman Sparrow's rescue of the citizens of the City of Silver and Moon City was also considered mystical knowledge, and could become a spell through Mystical Re-enactment. However, because too many people knew about it, its corresponding power was very weak.
But Ma'am Hermit's purpose in deliberately creating this "Path of Salvation" spell was not to deal with enemies or help herself. Her sole aim was to solidify the image of Gehrman Sparrow.
As "Gehrman Sparrow" arrived on the altar due to Mystical Re-enactment, the points of holy light immediately crowded around him, swelling slightly, and emitting ethereal voices:
"Praise you, great Angel of Redemption!"
"Praise you, herald of Mr. Fool!"
"Please save me from suffering, great Gehrman Sparrow!"
"I confess to you, seeking redemption!"

"My idol is Gehrman Sparrow!"
"I want to become a great adventurer!"
"..."
Voices related to Gehrman Sparrow echoed in layers, seemingly stabilizing and materializing the image of Gehrman Sparrow on the altar platform to some degree.
Meanwhile, at the entrance to the dream city opened by Madam Magician.
Madam Justice successfully wove a Gehrman Sparrow wearing a silk top hat and long black coat inside the movie theater where Franca's figure had already entered the screen.
Throughout the process, she didn't feel strong rejection from the dream.
However, as soon as Gehrman Sparrow's dream manifestation took shape, it only lasted for three seconds before uncontrollably and silently collapsing and dissipating.
Seeing this, the few spectators present instinctively applauded.
They increasingly believed that the beautiful young lady entering the screen earlier was part of a magic performance.

Chapter 1032: The Power of Many

Madam Justice didn't give up, once again weaving a new Gehrman Sparrow identity.

At this time, silhouettes appeared in the thin gray fog surrounding the dream city. They quickly swam towards the passage opened by Madam Magician, bringing violent tremors and self-contraction to the "door".

Madam Magician struggled against this, not letting the dream door close, not letting Madam Justice's attempt to weave Gehrman Sparrow's dream manifestation be и interrupted.

Mr. Hanged Man, who had already put down his liquor turned his gaze towards this direction, his hand already holding a blasphemous card.

The Tyrant card!

Boom!

Thunder crashed, and layers of intertwining silvery- white lightning struck the black silhouettes in the thin gray fog, making them writhe and struggle before dissipating, unable to approach the passage opened by Madam Magician.

Madam Justice remained unaffected, continuing to weave Gehrman Sparrow's dream manifestation.

In the altar, once the Gehrman Sparrow image created by Mystical Re-enactment was temporarily stabilized po by countless anchors, Mr. Star, who had been standing by the window, walked step by step towards this area.

As he walked, he recited:

"Like a storm petrel, soaring without yield,

"Knowing the tempest, mastering the field,

"Compelling them to peace,

"Brewing calm into rich release[1]..."

As the poem echoed, the sunlight in the room suddenly dimmed, as if clouds had drifted in.

Gehrman Sparrow on the altar closed his eyes in response, entering a deep slumber.

Now, he too was dreaming.

It was a nightmare, but also hope.

Seeing this scene, Mr. Moon, who had been quietly enduring the scorching sunlight, let his black cloak rise up behind him, like a giant bat spreading its wings.

He flew to the starlight gate opened by Madam Magician, entered that illusory passage, and arrived outside the hole leading into the dream city.

He didn't try to enter again, but turned around, reached out his

hands, and created an illusory, hazy door inscribed with numerous mystical symbols out of thin air.
This was the Door of Summoning. Door of Summoning from Sequence 3 High Summoner of the Moon pathway.
Mr. Moon wanted to summon Gehrman Sparrow, the current Gehrman Sparrow on the altar!
The next second, he opened his mouth and began to chant the corresponding honorific names and specific summoning incantations in ancient Hermes, "The Blessed of the spirit world and Sefirah Castle:
"The Mystery stemming from ancient times;
"The witness of an extended history;
"Angel who redeems mankind;
"Protector of all impoverished children;
"The great Gehrman Sparrow..."
In this kind of summoning directed at the false, the entire honorific name had to be recited.
As the subsequent incantations also echoed, that illusory, hazy door suddenly opened wide, revealing a boundless darkness dotted with stars and fluttering shadows.
But to Mr. Moon's slight disappointment, the Gehrman Sparrow image on the altar only turned to the side, with no other movement.
The power of reality seemed to be preventing this false event.
...
In the Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station, half in deep darkness.
Lumian looked at Zhou Mingrui and said to himself, "These all come from Mr. Fool's arrangements, all guided by fate.
"Since Mr. Fool sealed you, the Celestial Worthy, with this self-image of Zhou Mingrui, before he truly gains a significant advantage, awakening Mr. Fool would be equivalent to awakening you, the Celestial Worthy. So what we need is not awakening, but creating The World Gehrman Sparrow out of thin air in the dream.
"Only in this way will he not be a product of the merged consciousness of Mr. Fool and you, the Celestial Worthy, but pure and uncontaminated.
"His source is the believer anchors of Gehrman Sparrow, the cognition of Gehrman Sparrow by a large number of humans in the real world and the dream city, and the understanding of Mr. Fool by the Major Arcana card holders of the Tarot Club, not involving you, the Celestial Worthy.
"This is equivalent to Mr. Fool dragging you into slumber together, then creating a highly related identity that can stably exist with the help of others to wield authority on his behalf. The gradual

strengthening of this identity will help him gain an advantage using the corresponding authority, ultimately truly sealing you and awakening himself.
"This is the correct interpretation of the prophecy 'The awakening of The World spells The Fool's return'.
"This is also what you've been wary of all along, which is why you replaced the dream manifestations related to Gehrman Sparrow and had your subordinates Infiltrate the Church of The Fool, trying to make the final formed Gehrman Sparrow point to you instead of Mr. Fool.
"In that case, it would become 'The awakening of The World spells the Celestial Worthy's return',"
Zhou Mingrui calmly laughed twice, "What if your judgment and choices are all wrong?"
Lumian shrugged and said, "If they're wrong, then they're wrong.
"I never thought I would succeed in everything I do. On the contrary, I've always considered myself a failure.
"Failure is not scary. The failures of the Major Arcana card holders have paved the way for us, and our failures will also eliminate wrong answers for the future lucky coin holders and point out the correct, direction. This attempt will certainly delay the time for you, the Celestial Worthy, to achieve victory.
"In the time to come, there will be batch after batch of lucky coin holders arriving, standing on our shoulders, continuing to climb, looking further, until the true apocalypse arrives."
At this point, Lumian smiled at Zhou Mingrui, "This is very similar to a saying I learned in the dream city.
"Success doesn't have to be achieved by me, but I must contribute to its achievement!"
Zhou Mingrui fell silent.
...
In Trier, inside the luxurious villa, in Franca's bedroom.
As Madam Justice suffered another failure and began weaving Gehrman Sparrow's dream manifestation for the third time, while Mr. Hanged Man continued using lightning to prevent those black shadows in the gray fog from approaching the "door", Mr. Moon repeated the summoning incantation once more.
The Gehrman Sparrow on the altar, with his eyes closed, swayed, wanting to respond to the summoning in his dream, but unable to overcome the power of reality.
At this moment, around Mr. Star's emerald eyes, transparent worms seemingly with twelve segments crawled out.
They quickly formed a complex mystical symbol.
The symbol representing deception!

Almost simultaneously, Madam Judgment approached the altar and said in ancient Hermes, "Truth recedes here, while illusion grows stronger!"
Suddenly, the air in the bedroom solidified.
Gehrman Sparrow's figure first disappeared from the altar, then crossed that mysterious hazy summoning door, appearing in front of Mr. Moon, appearing in the passage opened by Madam Magician, appearing outside the hole leading into the dream city.
Then, Gehrman Sparrow's destination was also "deceived".
This character image created jointly by Mystical Reenactment, numerous anchors, and nightmare power flickered as it flew towards the dream city.
Suddenly, in the dark void outside the gray fog. silhouettes of people emerged.
They bypassed the lightning storm, charging one after another towards the "door" opened by Madam Magician, towards Gehrman Sparrow.
At this critical moment, no Major Arcana card holder could spare a hand or stop them in time.
Madam Judgment couldn't help but look out the window.
Madam Tinekerr and Madam Sharron had also arrived, guarding against accidents. *Would They be able to act in time?*
A moment later, Madam Magician saw a lighter-colored mist spreading outside the gray fog. Within the mist, there seemed to be a wilderness, a river.
Those figures flying towards Gehrman Sparrow crashed into the mist and suddenly disappeared.
Finally, Gehrman Sparrow, carrying numerous anchors, arrived inside the movie theater in the dream city.
At this time, Madam Justice had woven Gehrman Sparrow's dream manifestation for the third time.
The two Gehrman Sparrows attracted each other and merged together.
"Gehrman Sparrow!
"Gehrman Sparrow!"
The audience in the movie theater started shouting loudly.
With these shouts, the newly appeared Gehrman Sparrow became clearer, noticeably more stable.
But he still kept his eyes tightly closed, as if he didn't have a soul yet.
The repulsive force of the dream descended.
At this moment, Franca, pulling the Gehrman Sparrow from the movie, ran out of the screen.
Then, she saw another Gehrman Sparrow in front of her, also

wearing a silk top hat and long black coat.
This is... Franca had no time to think about anything else, as she caught a glimpse of the Gehrman Sparrow behind her starting to rapidly dissipate.
She gritted her teeth and, following the guidance of her Demoness of Despair spiritual intuition, pulled the Gehrman Sparrow from the movie towards the one in front.
The next second, she let go of the arm of the Gehrman Sparrow from the movie, watching as he was attracted and drawn by mystical forces, actively approaching the other Gehrman Sparrow and merging into him.
Rumble!
Terrifying noises came from midair again.
This time, it didn't sound like thunder rumbling, but closer to the collapse of the dream.
"Oh..." Franca suddenly made a surprised sound.
...
Inside Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station, the collapsed half remained in deep darkness.
Lumian looked up at the rumbling sky, then smiled at Zhou Mingrui, who was standing at the edge, just one step away from falling into darkness.
"Their attempt seems to have succeeded.
"Using countless anchors, Mystery Pryer powers, and Nightmare powers to create a Gehrman Sparrow image in reality, then finding a way to send him into the dream city to combine with the Gehrman Sparrow dream manifestation woven by the Dreamweaver wasn't a plan I came up with. It was a plan the Major Arcana card holders, had long ago, but hadn't had the chance to implement.
"My contribution was to suggest that the Gehrman Sparrow manifestation from the movie was the earliest to appear, produced out of thin air, and that a Demoness of Despair could bring him out of the screen. Why not try combining all three?
"Well, I had another contribution: creating such an opportunity."
Zhou Mingrui listened calmly, without any emotional change.
Suddenly, Lumian's smile became radiant, and he said softly to Zhou Mingrui, "My Despair potion has been fully digested."

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1. The last two lines are adapted from Rilke's "Day in Autumn" ↩

Chapter 1033: Worth It

Inside the movie theater.

Franca let out a surprised "Oh, because she felt her Despair potion fully digested.

Has Lumian's plan succeeded? This thought suddenly occurred to Franca.

Although she wasn't clear on exactly what Lumian intended to do or how, she remembered Lumian saying that once her Despair potion was digested, it would mean this operation had achieved its expected purpose, Mr. Fool would awaken to some degree, and the dream would completely collapse in a few minutes.

Franca instinctively looked towards Gehrman Sparrow to her side, and saw the roof of the movie theater collapsing inch by inch. But the corresponding heavy objects didn't crash onto the seats and floor, instead falling into the void and disappearing completely.

At the same time, white light emanated from the few audience members present, flying into Gehrman Sparrow's body.

Franca suddenly realized what these white lights were: they were the impressions, cognitions, and understandings of Gehrman Sparrow from different audience members!

As the dream approached collapse, these audience members revealed their illusory nature, and their corresponding memories split off on their own. becoming anchors and information to nourish and enrich Gehrman Sparrow's image.

From different parts of the dream city, more similar white lights rushed over.

It really worked... Franca joyfully raised her head, looking up to the heights no longer obscured by movie theater's roof.

The originally dark sky had collapsed in large patches, revealing terrifying deep blackness and thin grayish- white fog.

It was like a building whose walls had crumbled in an earthquake, but with the beams and pillars still standing, the skeleton still intact.

...

Inside Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station.

After hearing Lumian say his Despair potion had been fully digested, Zhou Mingrui, standing at the edge of the deep darkness, smiled gently, "That's good."

Lumian was stunned for a moment. "Mr. Fool?"

Zhou Mingrui nodded slightly, "It's me now."

He smiled and said, "You all did very well."

Smiling, Lumian replied, "If you hadn't sealed away most of the Celestial Worthy's power, including His thinking ability, we would

have had no chance of success."
Lumian was still carefully using "sealed" to describe Zhou Mingrui's original state, but the truth might not be so.
He had been saying this all along, mixing a bit of falsehood into his truth as he told the Celestial Worthy his guesses, judgments, and plans. Besides wanting to delay time, there was also an intention to reinforce the Celestial Worthy's cognition in this regard.
Of course, whether this was true or false, after today. it would become true!
Zhou Mingrui shook his head and smiled. "Relying on myself alone, it was already extremely difficult to restrain the Celestial Worthy. Without your help, the outcome might have been completely different.
"For example, if you hadn't driven out Zaratul in advance, today's operation would definitely have had setbacks, and the awakened World might have pointed towards the Celestial Worthy.
"And if it weren't for the help of those friends in the Western Continent, the Celestial Worthy might have had a chance to turn the tables in the end."
So the Celestial Worthy's backup plan, the preparations made for the arrangements left by the original God Almighty, was intercepted and prevented by certain existences in the Western Continent. My original plan was just to race against time, using the concealment of the Evernight Goddess to complete the fusion of the three Gehrman Sparrow images before the Celestial Worthy's backup plan could truly take effect... The Celestial Master, or the Underworld Daoist? Lumian made a sound of agreement and said with feeling, "Indeed, without the efforts and groundwork laid by the Major Arcana card holders before, even if we had deciphered the true meaning of all the symbols today, we wouldn't have had time to create the character of Gehrman Sparrow. We could only have watched helplessly as the situation tilted towards the Celestial Worthy's side.
"Similarly, without the hints from Peng Deng and Amon, we might still be exploring directions now, with the Celestial Worthy's fatal blow about to arrive..."
Seeing that Lumian was very clearheaded and rational in recognizing this point, Zhou Mingrui nodded with satisfaction.
Lumian didn't go on to talk about the contributions of gods and people like Stiano, Leodero, and Anderson, but asked eagerly, "Mr. Fool, can Aurore, my sister, really be resurrected?"
Zhou Mingrui looked at Lumian and said in a calm voice, "With her soul fragments sealed inside you and not dissipated, if you

were a Beyonder of the Seer pathway and had advanced to Miracle Invoker, then with my help, you could Graft one of your resurrections onto your sister's soul fragments. allowing her to truly return.
"But now, you can only rely on the resurrection of the Demoness pathway to separate your sister in the future."
Seeing Lumian fall into thought, Zhou Mingrui added, "You can no longer change pathways, and after your advancement to Demoness of Despair, Aurore's soul fragments have already fused with you to some extent. If you were to regress back to the beginning using the Sun pathway, her soul fragments wouldn't be able to withstand it and would completely dissipate."
Lumian was silent for a few seconds before saying, "Will the resurrection achieved through the Demoness pathway in the future be an essential resurrection, a true resurrection?"
"Yes," Zhou Mingrui sighed and said, "But wishes are often distorted, and the way they are realized may not be what you want. Just like when you saved my believer back then, I noticed you and foresaw that you would play an important role in the matter of dreams in the future, so I gave you the aura of the gray fog and my imprint. But I didn't expect this prophecy would be fulfilled in such a warped manner, and my actions were also part of the prophecy."
"So that old man was your believer." Lumian suddenly realized.
He laughed calmly. "Without the aura of the gray fog. perhaps I would never have met Aurore, never had that life in Cordu, and Aurore would still have been noticed by April's Fool, still been troubled by Roche Louise Sanson, and maybe wouldn't even have had a chance at resurrection."
At this point, Lumian took a breath and said, "I understand.
"As long as it's an essential, true resurrection, I can accept any form of realization."
Zhou Mingrui nodded slightly and extended his right palm. "You can give me that bottle of Samaritan Women's Spring water processed by Mr. Azik now."
As Lumian took out the small golden bottle from his Traveler's Bag, he asked puzzledly, "Mr. Fool, now that Gehrman Sparrow has been 'born', you don't need to drink this spring water anymore, right? The Celestial Worthy is sealed within you, so Him drinking is equivalent to you drinking, and besides, this only has a very weak effect on Sequence 0 True Gods."
The small golden bottle suddenly appeared in Zhou Mingrui's right hand, while Lumian's hand was now empty.
"I still need to sleep for a while longer." Zhou Mingrui said with a

smile. "Now is the opportunity to fuse with the Celestial Worthy and better resist Him, and this bottle of spring water is the medium.
"Gehrman Sparrow will become The Fool, embodying a bit of my will, until I fully awaken."
"Still need to fuse with the Celestial Worthy?" Lumian asked in confusion.
Zhou Mingrui nodded. "Yes, both fusing and resisting; this is currently the only path."
"Doesn't that mean..." Lumian suddenly closed his mouth, remembering a certain mystical knowledge he knew.
The spiritual imprint of the original Creator within the Beyonder characteristics was indestructible, including those of the original God Almighty and The Celestial Worthy of Heaven and Earth for Blessings!
Zhou Mingrui smiled and said, "No matter how I clinch victory, no matter how much you help me, in the long run, the one who will ultimately win this confrontation will inevitably be the Celestial Worthy."
Seeing Lumian fall silent, Zhou Mingrui continued with a gentle expression, "Most humans know they only have a few decades of life and are destined to pass away in the not-too-distant future, but this doesn't prevent them from enjoying their lives, from doing meaningful things, from being happy, suffering, sad, moved, satisfied, and missing others.
"You've also seen from Roselle's experience during this time that there is a lot of truth within dreams, that hope lies hidden at the end of despair, and that a moment's brilliance might point towards eternity."
Lumian was speechless for a moment.
After about ten seconds, he sighed. "Resisting every day, being eroded, trying to fuse, continuing for tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of years, or even longer, wouldn't it be very tiring?
"Wouldn't it be like before, when you still maintained self-awareness, but suddenly found yourself smiling strangely in the mirror?"
"It would." Zhou Mingrui sighed with a smile. "When I fully awaken this time, except for the strongest and most intense parts of Zhou Mingrui and Klein Moretti's emotions and humanity, everything else might no longer be the me of now."
This wasn't said in a speculative tone.
"As for whether it's tiring..." Zhou Mingrui's tone became a little more animated, "Of course it's very tiring, but there's no choice;

someone has to do this, right?"
Lumian's thoughts were jumbled and chaotic. He opened his mouth and said, "Is it worth it?"
Zhou Mingrui looked at him, suddenly took a step back, and fell into that deep darkness.
He didn't dissolve quickly like other dream characters falling into this darkness, but sank slowly as if in seawater.
Zhou Mingrui raised his right hand, brought that bottle of Samaritan Women's Spring water to his mouth, and drank it.
Then, as he slowly sank, he looked at Lumian outside the deep darkness, showed a gentle smile similar to before, and answered in a calm voice. "It's worth it."
After saying this, he suddenly winked his left eye at Lumian, not at all steady or serious, and not at all like the lofty Mr. Fool.
Lumian watched Zhou Mingrui sink into the depths of darkness until even his blurry silhouette disappeared.
He muttered to himself, "Worth it..."
In the movie theater, as those streams of white light merged, as Zhou Mingrui disappeared into the deep darkness, Gehrman Sparrow, who had been standing still as if asleep, suddenly raised his head.
He opened his eyes, his sharp gaze seeming to pierce through his gold-rimmed glasses.
With this, the sky of the dream city completely peeled away, all buildings collapsed with a rumble, and the images of characters like Grimm and Zhang Qing blurred until they completely dissipated.
Franca was confused for a moment, then woke up.
She saw a room full of people, saw the bright smile on Madam Justice's face that came from the heart, saw Madam Magician drinking red wine, saw clear and brilliant radiance.
Outside the window, the sunlight was just right.

Chapter 1034: Tarot Club

As the dream rapidly collapsed, Lumian withdrew his gaze, leaving the edge of that deep darkness and walking towards the disintegrating Yangdu High- Speed Rail Station outside.

He wanted to take one last look at this city.

Suddenly, he noticed a figure leaning against the wall at the position where the radiance converged into an exit, standing quietly.

That figure wore black armor stained with what looked like fresh blood, with fiery red long hair. The face was young and handsome, with two faint scars on either cheek, and a vivid red banner mark prominently displayed between his brows.

Unlike other dream manifestations that were blurry and nearly dissipating, this figure was not as clear as Lumian but had an illusory quality, like a spirit.

Lumian didn't need to ask to know who this figure was: Red Angel Medici.

"Did you come to wait for me?" Lumian asked with a smile.

He was prepared to leave this place along with the collapse of the dream.

Medici left the wall and stood up straight, letting out a sneer. "If you're too stupid to understand the hint, I'd have been the one to replace you on stage."

He looked into Lumian's eyes and shook His head. "Too weak, you're still too weak right now."

After this remark, the Red Angel slightly raised His chin and said, "I already know your experiences. I'll give you a chance-I'll come to hunt you down after you become an Angel.

"No need to thank me. This has nothing to do with pride. The pride of the war pathway isn't used against enemies."

Medici didn't give Lumian a chance to respond. He turned and walked into the passage, leaving Yangdu High-Speed Rail Station and the collapsing dream.

You waited until the very end just to say these few words to me? You must have also achieved some unknown goals by entering this dream, right? Lumian turned to the side, once again casting his gaze towards that deep darkness.

His biggest question now was where the deity, the Primordial Demoness, was.

The fact that Franca advanced in the basement of Mushu Hospital indicated that the Primordial Demoness indeed had a corresponding manifestation in the dream city. But in matters involving the special mirror world's great horror, the original God

Almighty and the Demoness card, and the major event of the dream's end, She hadn't appeared or intervened at all.
Before Lumian could think further, Yangdu High- Speed Rail Station collapsed silently.
He first felt a sense of weightlessness as if falling off a cliff, then opened his eyes and woke up.
He immediately saw some sunlight penetrating the curtains, with a large amount of dust floating in the air.
At the same time, faint sounds of singing, praising, and conversation came from next door, entering his ears.
Lumian lay quietly in bed, feeling the springiness of the mattress and the soft warmth of the covers, not wanting to move at all.
...
Half an hour later, in the living room on the first floor.
Madam Magician said to Lumian, Franca. Jenna, Anthony, and Ludwig-who was having afternoon tea -all who had gathered again,
"Mr. Fool has achieved an initial state of awakening. We will fulfill our promise.
"You've done very well this time, deserving the most generous reward. The result of our discussion is to do our utmost to help you advance one Sequence."
Jenna nodded without hiding her desire. "Thank you."
Lumian, Franca, and company had no objections and were quite anticipatory.
Madam Magician looked around and said, "Of course, this may need to wait a few days, because Mr. Fool's initial awakening will inevitably cause many changes that need to be dealt with promptly. The other Major Arcana cards are already busy at present.
"Moreover, you also need some time to adjust, shake off the influence of the dream, and regain your perception of reality."
At this point, Madam Magician looked at Lumian and asked as if to confirm, "Do you want to become a Demoness of Unaging or a War Bishop?"
Lumian didn't hesitate. "Demoness of Unaging."
Hearing Lumian's answer, Franca suddenly remembered the Demoness card's description of a Demoness of Unaging: Bizarrely difficult to kill, skilled at resurrection.
Skilled at resurrection... You really don't want to wait even one more day, even if it's just taking the first step... Franca sighed inwardly.
At this moment, Lumian raised his right hand, palm facing the ceiling.

There, in addition to several dark red brands and a patch of pale skin, there was now a pitch-black "pinhole."
He said to Madam Magician and his companions, "After using the Demoness card this time, with the magic mirror as a medium, invoking the great horror from the depths of the special mirror world to deal with the Mirror Person created by the Celestial Worthy, the residual aura of the Blood Emperor and the seal of the Underworld Daoist have changed a bit again.
"I can now use a War Bishop's power that was previously bestowed to a limited extent through this 'pinhole.' There's no need to advance again."
Madam Magician nodded slightly and said, "In a few days, go to the treasury of the Blue Avenger. There might be items related to the Demoness of Unaging there. If not, we'll ask Mr. Azik for help and go to the depths of the underworld again. There must be Demoness of Unaging Beyonder characteristics there."
Lumian and Franca had no objections.
After Madam Magician left, Lumian, in his Demoness of Despair state, leaned back against the sofa and smiled at Franca and the others. "Now it's time to sunbathe."
Jenna was silent for a few seconds before saying. "I want, I want to go see the real Luo Shan."
"Okay." Franca nodded heavily in agreement.
"Alright." Lumian had originally planned to go tomorrow.
...
In the evening, Loen Kingdom, Tingen City, Red Moonlight Street.
Jenna, Franca, and Lumian sat in a roadside café, watching two figures, one big and one small, approaching from a distance.
The larger one was about thirty years old, with brown hair tied up in a high bun, wearing a thin gauze- brimmed hat. She wore a green long dress that was somewhat girlish but leaning towards maturity, with flowing ruffles at the sleeves and beautiful lace adorning the neckline.
She had a pretty face, holding a paper bag of white bread in one hand and holding the hand of a three or four-year-old girl who looked like a little princess with the other. This was Rozanne, a civilian staff member of the Nighthawks team of the Church of the Evernight Goddess.
Compared to the Luo Shan in the dream, she was noticeably older, and her demeanor was more stable, but her style of dress revealed that she still had a lively side hidden inside.
Jenna and Franca's vision immediately blurred.
Lumian, in his female state, focused intently on Rozanne and her daughter as they passed by, chatting and laughing, becoming as

still as a statue.
After Rozanne and her daughter passed the café, the three Demonesses' gazes shifted, following the two figures from behind.
The golden-red glow of dusk fell upon Rozanne and her daughter, and the evening breeze carried their laughter and conversation to Jenna, Franca, and Lumian's ears:
"Mommy, what's a hero?"
"A hero is someone who protects others."
"Why do others need protection?"
"Why protect others?"
"Why? Why?
"Mommy, why?"
...
A few days later, Monday noon.
Lumian and the others met Madam Magician again.
The Major Arcana card holder sat down in the chair opposite the tea table and said to Lumian and Franca.
"You're both demigods now and have made great contributions. You're qualified to draw a Major Arcana card."
"Mr. Fool allowed it?" Lumian asked.
Madam Magician's entire being exuded a sense of relaxation, "Yes, but as a team, you can only draw one Major Arcana card for now. Who will draw?"
Franca looked at Lumian, hesitated for a few seconds, and said, "You draw."
She really wanted to see what she could draw and thought the identity of a Tarot Club Major Arcana card was very impressive. But thinking about having to take responsibility for a bunch of affairs as a Major Arcana card holder from now on, often having to brainstorm, she got a headache and decided to let Lumian take the lead first to see what it would be like.
"Are you willing to draw?" Madam Magician asked Lumian.
Lumian thought for a moment and said, "I'll draw."
Madam Magician said seriously, "After becoming a Major Arcana card holder, Two of Cups, Seven of Cups, and Four of Swords will all transfer under your jurisdiction.
"A Major Arcana card symbolizes not just you personally, but also the forces you represent."
"I understand." Lumian nodded slowly.
Only then did Madam Magician take out a deck of Tarot cards containing only Major Arcana cards and spread them out on the tea table. "You can draw now."
"Won't we draw a duplicate?" Franca asked curiously.
Madam Magician chuckled. "Spirituality will provide guidance."

Lumian glanced at the Tarot cards on the tea table, extended his right hand, and casually took one, turning it over in front of him.
What met Franca and the others' eyes was a large wreath of green plants intertwined and a woman standing inside the wreath.
The World card!
Franca and Jenna both looked at Lumian in his female state with slight astonishment.
He actually drew The World card?
Why?
Although Gehrman Sparrow now points to Mr. Fool, the legend of The World hasn't disappeared yet!
Lumian didn't speak, showing a thoughtful expression.
Madam Magician pondered for a few seconds before saying, "Draw again."
Lumian nodded in agreement.
This time, he drew two cards and placed them on his left and right.
After staring at these two Tarot cards for a while, he suddenly smiled with his beautiful face.
"Left for male, right for female. I'll take the one on the left."
With that, he unhesitatingly turned over the Tarot card on his left.
On the card face was a king standing on a chariot, with two lions, one black and one white, pulling the chariot.
The Chariot card!
"Not bad." Madam Magician stood up. "Welcome, The Chariot, um, Mr. Chariot."
After Lumian responded, Franca curiously said, "Can I see what the card on the right is?"
"You may." Madam Magician nodded to her.
Franca quickly turned it over and saw a woman wearing a crown sitting on a chair.
The Empress card.
"As expected..." Madam Magician sighed, then turned to Lumian and said, "Wait in your room at 3 pm today."
...
At 3 pm, in a bedroom of the luxurious villa.
Lumian, holding The Chariot card, sat in an armchair, patiently waiting.
Suddenly, chaotic and terrifying sounds rang in his ears, and a thin grayish-white fog appeared before his eyes.
Just a second or two later, he found himself by bronze long table, with a vast and magnificent dome above, surrounded by tall and majestic stone pillars.
Lumian immediately saw Madam Justice, Madam Magician,

Madam Judgment, Ma'am Hermit, and the lady from the temperance faction wearing a black court long dress and a small soft hat of the same color, sitting opposite him.
They all appeared blurry, but not too blurry.
Lumian also noticed that Mr. Hanged Man, Mr. Sun, Mr. Star, and Mr. Moon-whom he hadn't met before but could deduce the identity of-were on the same side as him.
At this time, no one was seated at the head and foot of the bronze long table.
"This is Madam Temperance, and this is Mr. Chariot." Madam Justice calmly introduced the obviously female Lumian as "mister."
Just then, at the huge chair at the top of the bronze long table, a figure gradually took shape.
He was within the gray fog, his figure quite blurry, allowing Lumian and the others to only clearly see a silk top hat and a black long coat.
Looking at this both familiar and unfamiliar figure, Madam Justice took a breath, stood up, curtsied with a slight bent of her knees, saying
"Good afternoon, Mr. Fool."
(End of Volume Six-Dreamweaver)